The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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DIAGNOSIS OF CONSERVATISM

REVOLUTIONARY faiths are enjoying such a field day in these United States that the existence of thoughtful, hard-headed men is in some danger of being forgotten. Perhaps it will do no harm to call attention to them momentarily—to the countless thousands in the professions, in business, on farms, in shops, who do their work dependably and never get into the newspapers. What is likely to be their attitude toward the situation in which all of us collectively now find ourselves? It is, we believe, quite probable that they see things in part rather than as a whole. They are pondering on what affects their life-work and the progress of the enterprise in which they happen to be engaged. Of course they see that all this is only a kind of little island in a general social disturbance, and doubtless some of them do now and then reflect on what might be done with that upheaval as a whole. But where is the American social philosophy to which they can subscribe? They feel an instinctive aversion to socialistic theories, and yet they have—many of them—a vague feeling that after all such theories are bound to dominate.

To say as much is to point to the appalling weakness of the conservative position in the United States today. Seven years ago, the men who had created great industries and amassed large fortunes had plenty to say. The press was bulging with their remarks on nearly every subject, and the number of their books was legion. Some even participated in the business of government, often doubtless in a spirit of sincere willingness to help in the nation's service. And today? Silence all along the line. There does not exist anywhere a journal of intelligent conservative opinion. While a mass of radical and revolutionary periodicals has sprung up in every part of the country, while writers with communistic tendencies profit immensely by the very

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fact that they have such tendencies, the argument for the "old guard" is made only by indirection, through magazines which adhere to the routine smartness and unintelligence of the capitalistic period. Even the radio, which the conservatives own, is a weapon used against them. Have they succumbed to the inevitable? Or is it simply a case of being dead from the neck up?

All this contrasts strangely with conditions abroad. There, during recent years, it was precisely an "enlightened capitalism"—under which term we do not include the rapacious owners of overcapitalized and reactionary businesses, fighting with their backs to the wall—which stole the intellectual show. In a dozen countries, post-war experience deepened the conviction that while the days of *laissez-faire* were gone forever, Socialism has been discredited also—that what was needed was an economy (call it "capitalistic," "solidaristic" or "cooperative," as you prefer) suited to a social outlook no longer able to dream of unlimited natural expansion, and definitively tired of thinking in terms of "master" and "slave." Though in many places this ideology did not triumph over political upheaval and emotion, it is deeply rooted and vital. The hour for it will strike again.

But here? The impression one gets is that the conservatives are waiting for "nature" to rescue them once more. Round their feet lies the dead weight of a few unwieldy and anti-social accumulations of wealth. The Mellon interests, to be specific, form a something which should never have been permitted to accumulate. But of them, and of the point of view behind them, the conservatives cannot get rid. They hobble along tugging after them these irrational and wearying burdens, looking for all the world like a party of gentlemen in top hats dragging their automobile which has foundered in the mud of a deserted country road. And so, tired out and in despair, they sit waiting for wind and weather to effect their rescue—for Roosevelt to fail, for Huey Long to divide the strength of the Democratic party, for a war in Europe, for anything in short which will give them another chance. Suppose that the chance did come. What then? To imagine that civilization in the United States can ever again repose upon the unintelligent inflationary prosperity of time gone by is to expose oneself to the merited ridicule of the people.

The true strength of the conservative is reason. He is the valuable protagonist of the truth that ours is a limited world, inside which the best use possible must be made of such easily exhausted resources as human nature, wealth and brains. Knowing that Utopias are always ridiculous, he safeguards the well-being of the masses by curbing the desires of those masses. He is the reservoir in which according to the laws of human activity treasure accumulates which might otherwise be wasted. But when the conservative ceases to believe in reason—when in short he grows panicky—he is only a little bourgeois, fit for the scorn of the poets and the stones of the mob. When he ceases to act he ceases, in any real sense, to be.

What has the conservative been doing? The other day an aviatrix reported that a student whom she was taking on a practise flight nearly caused an accident. When she tried to land, he put his feet on the controls and froze right there. Finally she resorted to violence. Well, the picture which the thousands of thoughtful, hard-headed men previously referred to must have of the protagonists of the conservative position is something like that. These have allowed the task of financial reorganization—e. g., the necessary job of relieving the fixed interest burden on industry and real property—to go undone. They have shirked initiative in devising ways and means through which the working capacity of the nation could be used as a weapon against unemployment. They have sponsored no single new idea which has in it any promise to the nation as a whole. Clinging to a liquid position and to a few phrases of the Constitution, they have opened the floodgates to partizans of social violence.

Conservatives, wake up! What you need is something more than a fear that security is insecure, that you have a right to exist for your own sakes, that you can function without a faith. The American tradition, for all its innumerable faults, is worth defending as something which embodied social values to which no observer, whether he wished to do so or not, could be blind.

Week by Week

THE WEEK bristled with occurrences and discussion. The Work Relief Bill was finally passed, virtually in its original form since the only amendment of importance is that authorizing the President to finance A.A.A. enterprises out of the $4,880,000,000 made available by the bill. Thus believers in heavy expenditures for public works as a remedy for the depression are at length to have their day. For the administration the measure is a rather decided gamble, since failure would have the very gravest economic, political and psychological consequences. It is generally believed that success will depend less upon the amount expended than upon the speed and efficiency with which the fund is administered.

The Trend of Events

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Nothing very new is projected, the most interesting aspect of the bill probably being the attention paid to rural rehabilitation. Let us all hope sincerely that the optimism behind this greatest of American peace-time projects will be justified, and that the criticisms directed against the plan will turn out to be the effects of undue timidity. The critics made some progress on another front, when a Senate committee found that the results of federal administration of public utilities were less impressive than had been claimed. It was pointed out in various quarters that the trouble with much existing and proposed legislation is a tendency to overreach—to try to do more than can be effectively accomplished by government. This was most evident, perhaps, in the McSwain bill to eliminate war profits. The really excellent proposals here made seem to have been sewn into so intricate a piece of legal embroidery that the finished product is little short of being a new draft act for a future war. Similarly, the interesting debate between Senator Wagner and Walter Lippmann on the pending labor bill seems to us to have brought out the same point—i. e., that the Senator, in endeavoring to right all wrongs, is in some danger of not dealing thoroughly with any wrongs. These are problems of the New Deal which its most sincere well-wishers must desire to see simplified.

The Outcome at Danzig

SINCE Danzig is only a small city, no tidal wave of news has come thence during the past few years. Otherwise we should all have been familiar with an amazing chronicle of suppression, terrorism and nonsense. The Nazi majority was particularly hostile to Catholics, not merely sending upright laymen to jail for no reason but treating themselves to a "cultural dictatorship" which finally drew from Bishop O'Rourke one of the most passionate indictments of their point of view to have been delivered by a Catholic prelate. Now all that remained was to seize absolute control of the city council and to quench every spark of opposition. The standard propaganda steamroller was set in motion—parades, mass assemblies, window-smashing, speakers from Goering to Goebbels, money, terrorism. Nevertheless, when the returns came in it was revealed that nearly 80,000 Catholics, Social Democrats and Nationalists (orthodox Lutherans, for the most part) had valiantly stood their ground against 125,000 Nazi voters. These Catholics of the German East are a stanch and dependable group. There was never any doubting their patriotism in years when the independence of the city was at stake; and there is now no questioning their resolute defense of the Faith. We over here take off our hats to them, especially to the young men among them, whom neither noise nor passion nor hope to get something has misled. They have done honor to their race, nation and religion. They have helped to show the world—what of necessity the Saar plebiscite could not show—the real Germany. Some time history may point to April 7 as the day on which a heavy stormcloud began to lift from Europe.

Degenerated Americans

DETAILS of the existence of wholesale starvation among an American peasantry poorer and more debased than European peasantry no doubt come as somewhat of a surprise to many Americans who have satisfiedly looked upon this as the land of promise and the home of the brave. Such conditions are revealed in the report of a Committee on Minority Groups in the Economic Recovery. This committee is sponsored by the Julius Rosenwald Fund. They bring a mass of statistical information to the support of what has been for some time rumored about the condition of the tenant farmers in the thirteen Southern cotton states. The economic problem of the white tenants is found to be more miserable than that of the colored. The latter have been moving to the cities; while the former remain on the land in a condition of impotence and squalor apparently worse than conditions in city slums. Sunshine, fresh air and the proximity to growing things in the country is too generally assumed to have some sovereign spiritual and physical effect. A good many people who had never been south of Atlantic City found "Tobacco Road," that strange play of poor whites which is exceeding even "Abie's Irish Rose's" long run, a travesty.

OTHERS that we know who have lived and labored in its region have told us that it is simple, stark, objective reporting on things that are. How much of the degenerate condition of these tenant farmers, subjected, the report says, to the most outrageous usury through the owners' manipulations of government funds supposedly provided for the relief of the indigent, is the result of a spiritual disease, that savage darkness of mind which William Faulkner has described with such horrible impact, a complete absence of any reasonable, or even approximate, morality and spirituality, it would be difficult to estimate in statistics. From the evidence available, we would judge that the long, hard labor of bringing some intimation of the internal elements of a better life must parallel the efforts to effect an improvement in their desperate material condition. If an open and violent attempt to establish Communism in our country comes, here will be a rabble as desperately tired of starvation as any in the times of the sanguinary epochs of

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the French communes. The Communists know this and, whatever their motives, have been trying to organize these disinherited to help themselves.

The Nutmeg Centenary

CONNECTICUT, say the scientists, was covered with ice during the glacial period. Some poorly informed persons hold that there has never yet been a real thaw — that neither the matchless loveliness of the valleys nor the strange charm of the hills can coax the native completely out of his self-created refrigerator. But those who have lived here know the secret. It is in the lines of old houses which extend across the little commonwealth, from Norwich to Salisbury and from Stamford to Putnam. It is in the omnipresent fringe of trees rising from the no less ubiquitous heap of boulders. It is in the excellence of Yale's gothic, of Hartford's residential tradition, of New Canaan's poetic environment. It is, in short, the secret of a community which still remembers that freedom is a good and simple thing. There is nowhere in the United States an area where human independence is so deeply cherished. Even the New Yorkers it has absorbed have changed scarcely anything. We have often looked down from a hill above the Connecticut River, on a sunny afternoon; and we have felt that in few other places is the presence of the Old World so discernible and the meaning of the New World so clear. Three hundred years have left their mark. This is evident particularly in the state's Catholic heritage, which even those who have fallen heirs to the mantle of the "wits" now respect. Today there are crosses on many, many hills, and teeming parishes in the industrial centers. Italians, Poles, Ukrainians, come and go to the ringing of bells. Upon them as upon the native the state casts its extraordinary spell, compounded of the ocean and the mountains, the rivers and the fields, the gales and the bracing sunshine, of a region unparalleled. Connecticut has a name no alien can pronounce, and a heart no stranger can fathom. It is a proud and lovely lady, whom truly age cannot wither or custom stale.

The Excellent Career

TO EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON life was a chance to write verse. He believed, as few can now believe, that inspiration would come to him who sought after nothing else. At the beginning this required a virtually heroic act of faith, since poverty and obscurity kept nothing they could reveal from this young man. The fact that he eventually triumphed may have been due to good luck, since it chanced that Theodore Roosevelt picked up a volume of Robinson's poems, liked them and helped the struggling author. They were remarkably fine poems, those early ones, curiously transcendental yet shrewd, in the tradition of New England. It was sufficient foundation upon which to base hopes for a brilliant career; and, despite the numerous reservations any critic will feel compelled to make, there is no doubting that Robinson is the only name in this generation which has anything like the ring of Browning or Tennyson. Possibly he was a little too withered for the root of any greatness that is not, in essence, a greatness of finesse. At any rate, his is a story which justifies the query: just how frequently is genius singled out and aided, these days? A man of journalistic or propagandistic abilities can make his own way and usually does. But one feels quite certain that others with an artistic endowment fully equal to Robinson's went unaided, at least until after the time when help would have mattered had passed. He will be remembered, then, as a poet, but also—and it may be particularly—as an index to the need for and value of literary patronage.

The Army Comes Through

ONE OF the touches in the fine play, "What Price Glory?", remembered after all this time, was the aftermath to Captain Flagg's interview with a young buck private who had lost his identification tag. The hard-boiled officer had uttered a scathing reproof; then, secretly touched by the youngster's desperate dejection, he summoned one of the three orderlies who attended him like familiar demons, and charged him: "Get Liebowitz (or some such name) a new tag if they have to build a factory in Hoboken to do it." The recent case of the twelve-year-old son of a poverty-stricken farmer who wrote to the United States army asking for a plow horse to help work his father's land, is very different from Liebowitz's, of course; but its sequel recalls the Flagg episode in the size of the machinery invoked to fulfil the boy's request, and the understanding which prompted its being put into operation. The field artillery unit to which the letter was sent did not put it aside with a laugh or even a sigh of sentimental pity for the boy. They decided that the manly and responsible little chap deserved to learn that he who trusts the army does not trust in vain. Two horses, good but no longer up to army duty, were selected, and the men contributed a few pennies apiece from their pay to effect the purchase. At latest reading, the horses had already been put to work, their proud young owner guiding the plow behind them. This is not only a bit of history which can be recognized as authentically American; it is by all odds the best army news that any of the papers have carried in months.

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THE BETTER HOUSING PROGRAM

By JAMES A. MOFFETT

THE NATIONAL HOUSING ACT is being recognized today as one of the greatest measures of financial reform in the history of the United States. Its purpose is nothing less than the development of a nation-wide system of home mortgage financing, which is to be created out of the chaotic and disordered facilities available for the financing of home ownership heretofore. But this is not all. It was realized at the time of passage of the act that the development of the new system would involve a long-range program, and that in the meantime facilities must be provided whereby the owners of real property of all kinds could obtain the necessary credit to repair the ravages of deterioration resulting from neglect during the depression. Consequently the act was so drawn as to provide for two separate but closely related phases of a comprehensive program, designed both as an immediate stimulus to economic recovery and as the means whereby ownership of the nation's homes will be made more widespread, more secure and easier of accomplishment for everybody.

The modernization phase of this vast undertaking centers around a unique plan of instalment credit insurance, which provides what amounts to a full guarantee against loss to lending institutions making loans for the modernization and improvement of any type of real property. Property owners of good character and adequate income may obtain loans in amounts up to $2,000 for periods of as long as five years, with the privilege of repayment by equal monthly instalments. The cost of such credit is substantially lower than has ever been customary for similar accommodation in the past.

These loans are obtainable from banks and other lending institutions in all parts of the country which have entered into the credit insurance contract with the Federal Housing Administration. I need not describe the technical details. These will be explained upon request, by the financial institutions of almost any community in the United States. Moreover they are receiving wide publicity through the community Better Housing campaigns which are now going on in all parts of the country. In these campaigns, which are the result of voluntary cooperation on the part of civic-minded men and women and business concerns everywhere, nobody is urged to borrow money if cash or other resources are available to carry out the work of modernization and improvement, but if credit is required it will be forthcoming under the plan, when the property owner has the requisite character and ability to meet the convenient terms of repayment.

Experience has shown, however, that for every dollar of money borrowed upon the insured credit plan, several dollars of cash are actually expended for modernization and improvement. But even this represents only the beginning of what is manifestly possible under this phase of the program. Industrial and other corporations have built up depreciation reserves running into billions of dollars. Only a little imagination and courage are required on the part of those in control of these immense sums to realize the desirability of their immediate expenditure for the modernization and improvement of plant and equipment of all kinds. With the view to extending the benefits of the insured credit plan to such business and industrial concerns as do not have the necessary cash or other resources, we have asked Congress to amend the law by raising the limit of the individual insured loan from $2,000 to $50,000. The modernization phase of the Better Housing program presents both an opportunity and a challenge to American business and industry.

What is offered by the modernization phase is only a forestate of what is to come in the fundamental financial reforms to which I have already referred. This long-range phase of the Better Housing program is based upon a plan of mutual mortgage insurance, through which the entire procedure of lending money against residential mortgages is to be standardized throughout the country. Without attempting to describe the plan in detail, I shall merely point out a few of its salient characteristics.

In order to qualify for mutual insurance a mortgage must conform to certain standard terms and conditions. Among other things, it must be a first lien, and it must be fully amortized by providing for regular monthly payments on principal and interest sufficient to pay it off by the time it falls due. It may run for as long as twenty years; and in amounts up to $16,000, it may be for as much as 80 percent of the appraised value of the property. It must provide also for the regular payment of a small premium to cover the mutual mortgage insurance. For the protection of the lender as well as for the convenience of the borrower, it must provide for the monthly payment of taxes, assessments, if any, and fire and other casualty insurance premiums. The sums collected for these purposes are held in trust by the lending institution and paid out when due.

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Space does not permit anything like a complete discussion of the manifold benefits to be derived from this type of home mortgage. Merely to mention getting rid of the worry and the expense involved in the renewal of the typical short-term mortgage will be sufficient to show the overwhelming advantages of the long term fully amortized mortgage to the present or prospective home owner. Of scarcely less importance, however, is the privilege of borrowing on a first mortgage up to 80 percent of the appraised value of the property. This will eliminate the necessity of second mortgages and other junior liens, with their exorbitant costs in the form of discounts, commissions and the like.

Under the insured mortgage plan home owners who are now burdened with troublesome mortgages should be able to refund them with a long-term amortized type of lien, thus once and for all getting rid of the anxiety over the future possibility of being refused a renewal. They can pay off the new mortgage by monthly instalments comparable with rent.

Those who wish to become home owners can acquire properties under similar convenient terms and conditions. For new construction, either the individual or the operative builder can submit plans and specifications to lending institutions approved by the Federal Housing Administration and obtain commitments to insure mortgages on the properties when complete. With such commitments temporary financing should be obtainable in the form of construction loans from commercial banks.

To the various mortgage-lending institutions of the country the benefits of the insured mortgage plan are likewise of the highest importance. The three most obvious advantages are: first, the superior safety of the insured mortgage; second, the privilege, in case of foreclosure, of immediately turning the property over to the Federal Housing Administration rather than getting into the real estate business; third, the possession in the insured mortgage of a standard asset which should be readily marketable.

All these advantages are in the nature of direct and immediate benefits to both borrowers and lenders. The broader benefits will be manifest in a sounder mortgage debt structure of the nation as a whole. This will result in a far greater stability of the construction industry than we have ever known before. By a more even flow of funds into the residential mortgage market, the peaks and valleys of former experience should be leveled out and the return of prosperity through revival of the construction industry should be real and lasting.

In this brief article I have been able to touch upon only a few of the many aspects of the immense program now being carried forward by the Federal Housing Administration. I beg leave to end the discussion by urging every reader of THE COMMONWEAL to study the whole program until it is fully understood, to discuss it with friends and neighbors, and especially with bankers and managers of other financial institutions. With understanding will come cooperation, and through cooperation, complete and nation-wide success will be achieved. For in the final analysis, the success of the entire undertaking will depend on the American people.

PHILIP HALE

By WALTER PRICHARD EATON

BOSTON is celebrating this year the 300th anniversary of the most famous patch of grass and trees in America, the Common; but Philip Hale is no more. To some of us old Bostonians his passing from the local scene marks the end of an era in Boston history no less definitely than would the passing of that ancient green itself. Indeed, some of us always associate the two. Long ago, thirty-five years to be exact, Boston dug a subway under the Common, disturbing in the process many antique bones in a tiny burial plot near Boylston Street, and erecting nearby, and also close to Park Street, several stone kiosks over the entrances. The first morning after the stagings were removed from these structures Hale entered the office of the Boston *Journal*—a now defunct newspaper for which he was music critic and daily columnist—deposited his Boston bag on his desk, and remarked, "I see the Public Library has littered on the Common."

It was in those Boston *Journal* days that I knew him best and saw him often. I was a cub reporter just out of college—part of the time, indeed, still a student. He was already famed as a critic of music, he was organist in a large church, he was a member both of the St. Botolph and the exclusive Tavern Club, and he conducted on the back page of the paper a column, "The Talk of the Day," which after the death of Eugene Field in Chicago had no rival for a decade. But to me, and all the other Boston reporters, he was primarily a newspaperman. He came to the dingy office every day. He talked and joked with the rest of us. He turned out a prodigous amount of copy all written in long hand on yellow paper. He praised a good story. He wel-

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comed contributions to his column, but to get one accepted meant that you had to write well, with point and brevity, with style and charm. If the editor of this journal will permit a reference to himself, I will add that his contributions were more often accepted than those of anybody else, and the encouragement which Hale thus gave to his literary aspirations must have been a blessing to him as he toiled through the daily grind of routine reporting. But to all us youngsters in Boston then Hale was both a kind friend (who, to be sure, would turn aside any show of gratitude with a witty sarcasm), and a journalistic yardstick by which we measured our abilities. On Newspaper Row, in the dirty offices of the four papers which then occupied it, among a large group of ill-paid, often ill-educated, and always overworked reporters, Philip Hale, without the faintest hint of self-consciousness, upheld an ideal of writing for the craft, and moved among us daily with the ease of genuine fellowship. We gave him without stint of our admiration and affection, though never to his face — or never twice. After all, he was a Yankee!

Soon after Boston dug itself a subway it built itself a new Symphony Hall, which was opened with much ceremony and a speech by Major Higginson, founder of the great orchestra. The papers, of course, devoted columns of space to the event, but what most of us remember now, of all that was spoken and printed, is a single sentence by Philip Hale. The red-lighted doors, he remarked, should be labeled, "Exit in case of Brahms." He may later have modified his opinions about this composer, after the public, too, had somewhat modified theirs! He had always a shrewd common sense in criticism which kept him from being swept off his feet by a popular fad, as when in the days of Wagner worship he defended Italian opera, declaring that it still had its place in the world, indeed, still had dramatic validity. Time has vindicated his position.

One of the early events in the new Symphony Hall was a song recital by Emma Eames. Those who remember this famous singer will not need to be told that her voice was white and her stockings blue. From the misty past comes back to me one sentence of Hale's review. "Madame Eames," he wrote, "sang 'Who is Sylvia?' as though Sylvia were not on her calling list."

In its barbed perfection this would be hard to excel. But it might give a wrong idea of Hale's wit, which as a rule was kindly and only barbed when the occasion demanded. For mawkish sentimentality, for egotistical incompetence, and for hypocrisy, he had no mercy. It was in a spirit of good nature that he refered to a book on the art of singing by W. J. Henderson, the New York music critic. "Billy is the last of the great vocalists," said he.

Probably it is time I set down exactly who Philip Hale was, and his better-known accomplishments. When writing of a friend, one forgets that there are any who did not know him. For the bald facts, then: Philip Hale was born in Norwich, Vermont, March 5, 1854, and was graduated from Yale with the class of 1876. Three years later he was admitted to the bar in Albany, but had no liking for the law, and in 1882 went to Berlin to study music. After two years in that city, and further study in other German centers, he went to Paris and studied under Guilmant. In the late '80's he returned to America with a sound musical equipment, the knowledge of two foreign languages, a great relish for beer, and a continental lightness and playfulness of mind laid over his shrewd Yankee common sense. Nature had given him wit, of course, and also a memory so extraordinarily retentive that his scholarly habit of filing and indexing clippings and references seemed almost unnecessary. Once when some reporter was seeking for a quotation he but vaguely recalled, and could not even name the source, Hale said, naming the book, "You will find it on a left-hand page, near the bottom, in an early chapter." It was. And he had not opened that book since he was a boy. In the 1880's Boston was still looked on as an intellectual center. Howells had come there, and so had Hamlin Garland and James A. Herne. It was, with its new symphony orchestra, certainly a musical center. Here Hale came in 1889, as organist of Dr. deNormandie's church, and also as music critic of the *Post*. In 1891, he joined the staff of the *Journal*, and began his daily column, to which his vast reading in the byways of literature contributed so much, and which was one of the few features of daily journalism which the fastidious Harvard English department of that period looked upon with approval.

In 1903, he went to the Boston *Herald* and remained with that newspaper until his death last November, though inactive from illness during the final year. For the *Herald* he wrote music criticism, dramatic criticism, book reviews, a daily column called "As the World Wags" and innumerable editorials on a wide variety of topics. But probably the general public, certainly outside of Boston, came to know him best for his program notes supplied for the concerts of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He began these notes in 1901 and continued to supply them till 1933. When the orchestra came to New York, to Carnegie Hall, the programs had to be distributed at a store across 57th Street; and solely to possess Hale's notes the entire audience rushed across to get them before the concert began. They were worth, indeed, far greater trouble to secure, for they combined sound musical scholarship and straightforward analysis of the music to be

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played with an endless fund of anecdote and quaint illustration, with humor, wit and charm. There had been nothing quite like them before, and there has been nothing since; which is to say there are few scholars like Hale.

For, after all, he was a scholar. He supplied technical analysis and historical information, the result of solid musical knowledge and painstaking and accurate research, but he was also a lover of the odd, the unusual; he had a vast library of curiosa with its contents at his finger-tips; and he was a sensitive literary artist who could not be dull if he tried. That alone would set him apart from most of the scholars of this world, if not from most of the critics.

The ability to write good musical criticism is one of the rarer accomplishments. Music is at once precise and vague, mathematical and emotional. What is precise in it can be criticized only by an expert. But for the mass of people it is the vague emotionalism which appeals, and to write of that without mawkishness, with common sense and yet due sensitivity, is enormously difficult. How difficult you may easily discover by reading certain of the New York papers after a concert conducted by Toscanini. Philip Hale had the necessary dual equipment of technical knowledge and sensitivity, and the literary taste and skill to hold them in proper balance, to avoid sentimental excesses on the one hand and dryness on the other. His work was a model of how scholarly and yet stimulating true musical criticism can be; and it was so regarded by the public and his fellow craftsmen.

One brief quotation must suffice, taken from a delightful sketch of Schubert in a Symphony program note:

> Then there is the ineffable melancholy which is the dominating note. There is gaiety, such as was piped naively by Blake in his "Songs of Innocence"; there is the innocence that even Mozart hardly reached in his frank gaiety; yet in the gaiety and innocence is a melancholy—despairing, as in certain songs of "The Winter Journey," when Schubert smelled the mold and knew that the earth was impatiently looking for him. . . .

Rarely or never did Hale exceed this pitch in writing of the emotional side of music, and in this restraint lay, when he wished, a moving eloquence.

He wrote, in addition to music criticism, many dramatic criticisms for the *Herald,* but these were of slight importance. He was not greatly interested in the theatre and not particularly happy writing about it. He was happy in his "As the World Wags" column where he could indulge his playfulness as waggishly as he liked, inventing odd characters, culling bits of outlandish information from his vast store of curiosa, and laughing at the absurdities of the day. In his later years there was but one other man on a Boston newspaper who represented, like him, sound knowledge in criticism, cultivated judgment and literary skill—H. T. Parker of the Boston *Transcript.* Parker was the best dramatic critic in America outside of New York City, and he had few peers there; just as Hale was the best music critic, with few if any peers in New York. (Incidentally, Hale was over and over again solicited by New York papers to join their staffs, but could never be tempted from Boston.) He and Parker died almost within the month, and they have no successors in the city of the Puritans.

They both represented a critical attitude which assumed a general interest in the best things, and appealed to no other interest. To both of them criticism was an art as well as a high responsibility, and what they produced could without shame stand in the company of the works criticized. Both were picturesque figures in the city: little Parker with his cape coat, Hale with his white hair and mustache and his habitual red or black bow tie (perhaps his one touch of the sentimental, for it was no doubt a reminder of his Bohemian student days). Both are gone, and with them has passed from Boston one of its few remaining leaderships. Its newspapers now are filled with movie gossip and routine hack-writing about the few plays which come there and the concerts of its still regnant orchestra.

And with Hale, too, has passed from the newspaper world of that city a man who upheld in every sort of writing the ideal of style and distinction, because style was as much an instinct with him as personal cleanliness; and who did so as a proudly acknowledged member of the lowly Fourth Estate. That is why, to me, his death marks in my ancient city the passing of an era. The rapier of his wit and the polish of his style and the high democratic distinction of his person long held the Philistines at bay. Now the breach stands wide and open.

My Body Broken—

Strange human demand.
The doubting lover cried:
"I will not know Thee present
until I touch Thy side."

So—pain be proof.
Not high unshaken star,
but the strained link annealed,
breach healed, rift sealed, red scar.

O faithless-faithful,
rejoice, your Lord is here—
daily Love smiles above
the mark made by the spear.

GRACE FALLOW NORTON.

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THE LAY FACULTY: A REPLY

By JEREMIAH K. DURICK

Professor Durick here writes a reply to an article in our last issue. Mr. Stames, it may be recalled, found that the lot of the lay professor or instructor at a Catholic college was more than usually thorny because his clerical associates and superior took what Mr. Stames felt was an unfair advantage of him. The respect due the priestly office was confused with respect for pedagogy of men who, Mr. Stames held, were insufficiently prepared to be authoritative in this field. Professor Durick, also a layman, disagrees.—The Editors.

DURING the past five years, we Catholics have been engaged in the great national pastime of questioning our educational practises no less zealously, honestly and contritely than our fellow citizens of other creeds. It is not surprising, then, that we have been asking "right out in meetin'," as the New England Yankee used to say, certain questions which a few years ago we would not dare to mention in private conversation. These questions are well illustrated by those which Mr. Ward Stames (obviously and wisely a penname) asked in THE COMMONWEAL of April 12: "Why do not more young Catholic laymen who have received advanced degrees accept positions in Catholic colleges?" and the corollary question, "And why is it so generally true that these colleges cannot hold them for more than a year?"

At first glance, these questions are seemingly innocent; indeed, the first has been asked before probably hundreds of times, although rarely in print. It is not so much the questions themselves which should disturb our consciences as the answers which Mr. Stames has given to them, or, as Mr. Stames might well contend, the unfortunate implications of the very fact that they need to be answered. Up to now we have been not unjustifiably afraid to question openly even the external and accidental weaknesses in our Catholic educational system, for fear of scandalizing our weaker brethren. Hence, it is not surprising that questions and answers such as Mr. Stames proposes may seem embarrassing if not positively heretical, because they strike right at the heart of the entire problem of Catholic Action. For, if one of the most vital forces in Catholic Action is giving us, as Mr. Stames's article seems to argue, such conspicuous evidence that the clergy and laity cannot really coöperate harmoniously for the cause of Christ and His Church, what can we expect from the other forces in our program which look to our colleges and universities for example, as well as for light and leadership?

Because this problem is so vital and because I disagree very heartily with Mr. Stames's single premise and with most of the items in his bill of indictment, I propose in this reply, first, to refute his premise, secondly, to emphasize certain other premises of paramount importance in any careful analysis of this problem, and, finally, to show that his specific complaints can be explained away. Incidentally, I shall offer a few tentative suggestions for correcting certain accidental evils which, any priest-teacher must admit, have arisen in the treatment of the lay professor in the Catholic college.

Let us consider Mr. Stames's premise. He begins the body of his article by contending that the clerical members of our Catholic college faculties fail to make a distinction between their priestly office and their duties as professors. He says (rather irrelevantly, it seems to me) that this distinction is made by the North Central Association and kindred standardizing agencies, and he assumes throughout his article that this distinction is valid, admittedly because he wished to escape the odium attached to laymen who castigate the clergy. He implies, moreover, that the failure of the priest-teacher to make this distinction, although partly the fault of the laity, including college students themselves, places the lay teacher under an initial handicap, because he must teach beside men who seem to be invested with "supernatural wisdom' and who are given to making "sacerdotal pronouncement" in a "more or less ex cathedra tone of voice." No one can deny that there are some priest-teachers who, to put it mildly, are addicted to a dogmatic type of pedagogy. It is generally admitted that the dogmatic teacher, whether priest or layman, is no true educator at all; but he is just as common in non-Catholic schools as he is in our own—and, in our own, he is by no means always a priest. He is no more attractive or infallible because he happens to wear a Roman collar, but, on the other hand, he is likely to be less offensively priggish than a new-made Ph. D. Surely Mr. Stames does not mean to have his readers infer that the "imposition of hands" is in its very nature a creator of false pride and the superiority complex. The Roman collar and cassock may put the fear of God into the hearts of unruly or sceptical students for the time being, but ultimately the American student will respond both in discipline and studies to any teacher, lay or clerical, who, in the language of the college campus, shows that he "knows his stuff."

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But, even granting that "the sacerdotal power ever lends authority to the educational," is Mr. Stames on sure ground in his distinction between the priest as priest and the priest as teacher? He says: "It does not follow that he [the priest] shall teach mathematics or sociology, these offices he has taken unto himself—there is no Scripture for it." To argue thus is to deny the entire educational tradition of the Church. It is true that it does not follow that the priest shall teach mathematics or sociology merely because he has studied theology; nor does ordination as such fit the priest to become a professor of theology. To maintain, however, that the priest, when he is equipped to teach the various branches of so-called secular learning, does not teach them as a priest is absurd and places, indeed, an unwarrantable limitation on the teaching office of the priesthood. One need only glance at the recent encyclical on Christian education of Our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, to discover sentence after sentence which implicitly or explicitly refutes Mr. Stames's assumption. In fact, the Holy Father in a splendid passage in the encyclical eulogizes the lay teachers in our Catholic schools, but, note well, he refers to them as "most excellent and powerful *auxiliaries*."

Before examining Mr. Stames's specific complaints against the treatment of the lay teacher, it seems to me that there are several other very important premises to any intelligent discussion of this problem, which he fails to consider. We need not dwell on the vexing situation of the "protracted impoverishment" of the lay teacher, which, according to Mr. Stames, is "half the reason" that our Catholic laymen refuse to accept positions in our colleges. It seems to me that I have heard similar complaints when I was teaching in the public schools, and often, even in pre-depression days, we heard of the hand-to-mouth existence of professors in all but our most heavily endowed non-Catholic colleges. Far be it from me to neglect this or any other opportunity to tell the world and our college administrators that we teachers need more than a subsistence wage. But when we get it, I suspect half of the poetry and most of the pity will be taken out of our traditional lot, to say nothing of the merit our "poverty" earns for us unto life everlasting. Nor shall we take the time in this article to dwell on a kindred disability of the lay teacher: the insecurity of his appointment. Any complete discussion of the problem cannot, however, fail to take into account the fact that perhaps one of the chief reasons the lay teacher does not want to remain more than a year on the faculty of the Catholic college is that he never knows when a priest or other religious may be assigned to his place. I mention this point, realizing full well, as Mr. Stames should, that many laymen have held and shall in all probability continue to hold permanent places on our colleges faculties.

There is one premise to this discussion which, to any mind, is even more fundamental than any consideration of finance or tenure: before Mr. Stames or any of us can tackle this problem with hope of arriving at anything like a satisfactory solution, he must have more evidence about the present plight of the lay teacher than anyone is yet prepared to offer. Here is a fine field of research for some poor devil in quest of a doctorate in education! Until such evidence is gathered and properly analyzed, neither Mr. Stames nor I can submit as valid evidence any of our experiences, however annoying; for it is even more dangerous to generalize about the Catholic college and university than it is to generalize about Princeton, Wesleyan, the University of Illinois and the "hick" colleges of the American hinterland. When one speaks of the Catholic college, he is talking about institutions which differ among themselves, in spite of obvious doctrinal and cultural homogeneities, as much as the various religious orders which conduct them, not to mention the differences among the colleges conducted by the secular clergy. Now it must be evident to anyone moderately conversant with the Catholic college that there are many and varying academic policies, even among the colleges conducted by the same religious order. These include, of course, variations in the status of the lay professor. There are signs today that this status is improving in many of our colleges, if we may be permitted to infer improvement from the increasing number of laymen who have been appointed deans, directors of studies and even presidents. Of course Mr. Stames, out of the bitterness (if not the fullness) of his own experience, may argue that these chosen ones are mere figureheads. But neither he nor I can be on very firm ground in maintaining or opposing such an inference.

One must admit, however, that Mr. Stames would be on firmer ground, if he argued that these advancements to the layman have been largely achieved by expediency. Are we not, after all, in the words of the Holy Father, auxiliaries in the promotion of Catholic education? While I am firmly convinced that we have become important and, I hope, permanent auxiliaries, there can be little doubt that the first lay teachers to be employed in our Catholic colleges were hired as "stop-gaps" to fill in places for which no priest or religious was available. Nor can there be any doubt that some of the advancements which have recently come to laymen are the results of similar expedient causes. We must remember that at present neither Canon Law nor the constitution of any teaching order makes provisions for the lay teacher; nor is there any

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likelihood that his position will ever be determined by regulation.

We must also remember that it is not so many years since several of our colleges, which now employ nearly the "ideal 50 percent" of laymen, had but two or three lay members on their staffs and these in capacities hardly above the rank of "glorified janitors." Nor is it so many years since teaching, except for the clergy, was regarded as a not very "manly" occupation. This was a good old-fashioned American prejudice to which we gave our own peculiarly Catholic twist. It was all right for a Catholic boy to go to college to prepare for the Church or law or medicine, but, unless he became a priest, it was generally considered a sure sign of feeblemindedness or lack of ambition for him to enter the teaching profession. It has been, with a comparatively few notable exceptions, only since the post-war rush to the colleges that any considerable number of Catholic laymen thought of entering the teaching profession. The Catholic layman is, indeed, a newcomer to the field of Catholic education. This is a premise which we surely cannot ignore.

In this long and seeming digression, much of the work of refuting or explaining away Mr. Stames's specific complaints has already been accomplished. Hence, we need only review them briefly in the remainder of this article. It has already been pointed out that advancement has come and, I hope, will continue to come to the lay teacher when conditions warrant it, and when we "auxiliaries" demonstrate our ability to adapt ourselves to the Catholic "way" in education. To the priest, particularly to the religious, professional advancement, as that term is understood in state and other non-Catholic colleges, means little, except in so far as it affords increased opportunity for service to the cause of Catholic education. It may not be easy for the layman to accept such a concept of advancement, but accept it he must, if he is to take his place in the Catholic college. It may be unfortunate that the Catholic scheme compels him sometimes to serve under a priest-teacher who is his inferior in academic attainments, but, as I said before, until definite regulatory provisions for his status are set up, he must accept his lot and trust to the good sense and good-will of his superiors. The layman on the faculty of the Catholic college needs must learn the ideals of the religious order for which he is teaching, and, whether on the faculty of a "religious" or diocesan college, must have a thorough understanding of the Catholic philosophy of education. His priest-colleagues, on the other hand, need to be reminded that the layman is no longer a "glorified janitor," no longer an Ichabod Crane, but an auxiliary in the work of Catholic Action, and as such is not to be subjected to "insults" and "humiliations." The lay teacher, especially one trained in non-Catholic institutions, must remember that it takes more than a year to make adjustment to academic traditions which are usually older and more firmly established than those of the university at which he took his Ph. D. Once these reminders are understood, both by the priests and by the laymen on our faculties, and once they are translated into practise, the petty disabilities of the lay teacher should largely disappear. As for the layman being ignored on important faculty committees and in teachers' meetings, all I can say is that, if he is a real scholar and teacher, he should say a fervent *Te Deum* that, unlike his brother-teachers in non-Catholic colleges, he is spared the agonies of academic wranglings, which rarely serve any real educational purpose. If he has any suggestions or complaints about academic or disciplinary policies, let him voice them to his superiors, and I am sure that ordinarily he will get a fair hearing.

I realize that I may have oversimplified some of the grievances submitted by Mr. Stames, but I fear he has greatly magnified them. Perhaps the above remarks may give him a better perspective of the lay teacher's position, if not more consolation in his own humiliations.

Among other complaints, Mr. Stames deplored the gratuitous advice on teaching method, often given by clerical colleagues to the lay teacher. I suppose, then, he will resent having me say in all charity as one layman to another that I should advise him to give up teaching altogether. Wherever he turns, be it to the non-Catholic college, the exclusive private school, or the public school, he will hear all kinds of first-hand and second-hand tales, warning him to take up piano-tuning or to shoot himself before he submits to the indignities of the academic treadmill. "Pity the poor professor!" "Et tu autem, Domine, miserere nobis!"

Saint Peter

You did not know the pain you caused your Lord
Until you heard the cock's triumphant crow
That hurt you more than could a sanguine sword
More than the wounds that you were yet to know.
Harried with grief you fled into the dark
And in the lap of earth let fall your tears.
You did not hear the song of morning lark,
Only "I know Him not" rang in your ears.
You could not look the sunlight in the face.
The weight upon your heart had bowed you down,
Only a black denial you could trace
In eyes of men you met about the town.
And all the while the Master loved you so,
Seeing the hard road you had yet to go.

SISTER MARY EULALIA.

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GOLDEN AGE OR MILLENNIUM?

By SELDEN PEABODY DELANY

IS THE world growing better or worse? Do the extraordinary scientific inventions and discoveries of recent times give us grounds for believing that this is the most favored era of the world's history and that ultimately we may look forward to the eradication of all injustice, to a planned economy and an ideal social commonwealth, when there will no longer be want in the midst of plenty, and when every man will be free to fulfil the purpose of his being? Is there a good time coming when, in the words of Tennyson, the war drum shall beat no longer, and we shall have achieved "the parliament of man, the federation of the world"? Or must we reluctantly conclude that we are living in an age of decadence and that the highest attainments of the human spirit belong entirely to the past—to a vanished golden age when the world was young and everyone could enjoy to the full the bountiful gifts of nature?

Which of these two theories we shall hold depends largely on our own particular type of mentality. There are two types of mind, more or less congenital, which may be roughly designated as the pessimist and the optimist. While we need not go so far as to define the pessimist as one who has to live with an optimist, yet it is true that they never hit it off very well together.

The pessimist is inclined to see only the evils of this present age. He has a "nostalgia for the past." There have been representatives of this type in every age. Today they hark back to the security and stability of the Victorian age; but many Victorian men of letters, such as Ruskin and Carlyle, denounced the age in which they lived for its softness and degeneracy. Likewise there is a school of modern writers who have written eloquently of the glories of the Middle Ages, and have drawn vivid pictures of the idealistic conditions which prevailed in "Merrie England" in the days before the Reformation.

In every age there have been pessimistic prophets. In 1797, Burke declared "barbarism is entering upon us." In 1782, Cowper said that England had already sunk into "a state of decrepitude." Voltaire complained of the trivialities of the eighteenth century. Many contemporary writers felt gloomy about the Elizabethan Age or the age of the Renaissance in Italy. Dante did not have too high an opinion of the century in which he lived. There have always been men with acutely critical minds who have been dissatisfied with their surroundings and convinced that the best ages of mankind were always in the past.

On the other hand, the optimistic type of mind is accustomed to despise the past and to appraise its own civilization as the highest that has ever been reached. Those who have inherited this type of mentality believe that the world is steadily growing better. They are ardent champions of progress. They have the utmost confidence that we shall ultimately work out a new order of society in which justice shall prevail: when everyone will enjoy freedom within necessarily imposed limits, possessions will be evenly distributed, the agriculturists and industrialists will dwell side by side in perfect amity and everything will be for the best in the best possible of worlds. As a rule these hopeful spirits believe that if the present system of government and social organization could only be destroyed, it would necessarily be supplanted by a better system.

That is the quintessence of optimism, based apparently on the bland assumption that the world is necessarily growing better with every generation, and that every cataclysmic crisis must bring about an improvement. Even a very sketchy study of history ought to convince anyone that no revolution has ever achieved the grandiloquent results that were looked for. The French Revolution found its ultimate fruition in Napoleon. These orgies of destruction have never ushered in the millennium. The idealistic hopes of the social and political reformers have always been dashed to pieces on the unyielding rock of human nature. The lesson of history is that no revolutionary upheaval can be successful unless there is a change in the soul of man, but it is a self-evident truth that the soul of man remains pretty much the same under all social conditions. There are too many self-seekers who stand in the way of every idealistic experiment; too many insincere and dishonest men who cannot be trusted to work disinterestedly for the common welfare. We do not have to look far from home to see how incompetence, ambition and greed will bring to naught any scheme of social reconstruction.

Mr. H. G. Wells has devoted his life to endeavoring to establish in the world an ordered international society, a sort of world state; but his hopes have again and again been shattered by the unwillingness of his fellows to listen to his appeals and the fundamental dishonesty of human nature. In his "Autobiography" he sums up the difficulties which have frustrated his well-meant designs. Unintentionally he has approximated a definition of original sin:

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> The truth remains that today nothing stands in the way to the attainment of universal freedom and abundance but mental tangles, egocentric preoccupations, obsessions, misconceived phrases, bad habits of thought, subconscious fears and dreads and plain dishonesty in people's minds—and especially in the minds of those in key positions. . . . Though most of the people in the world in key positions are more or less accessible to me, I lack the solvent power to bring them into unison. I can talk to them and even unsettle them, but I cannot compel their brains to see.

What is needed if an ideal social order is to be established in this world is that all men in a given area should embark upon the task voluntarily, be willing to make sacrifices, submit their wills to authority and be animated by an all-embracing charity. Such communities have been created over and over again by the religious orders. Inspired by a supernatural faith and impelled by spiritual aims, men and women have voluntarily bound themselves by the threefold vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. In such religious communities justice, peace and harmony prevail and divergent human energies are linked together for the accomplishment of superhuman tasks. He would indeed be an optimist who believed that any modern state, much less the whole world, could ever be disciplined and organized after the manner of a religious community.

It would seem to be folly therefore to imagine that at any time since the Fall our ancestors have lived in a better world than ours; but is it not equally foolish to believe that human nature being what it is we can establish in this world a perfect social order? The Saviour of the world labored under no such illusion. He declared that the kingdom of God was at hand, but he made it clear that this kingdom was not of this world.

As a great Frenchman has observed, "All ages resemble each other in human wickedness." No epoch in the world's history has been altogether good or altogether bad. Each epoch is simply different from every other. There are many admirable features in our present state of civilization which were entirely lacking in the Middle Ages: the telephone and telegraph, the typewriter, the steam and gasoline engines, the radio, the cinema, proper drainage and plumbing facilities. On the other hand, the Middle Ages excelled our twentieth-century world in many respects, as witnessed by the "Divine Comedy" of Dante, the "Summa" of Saint Thomas Aquinas, the matchless Gothic cathedrals that lifted their spires all over Europe, the high standards of religious painting in Italy that have never since been surpassed, and the spiritual solidarity of the nations of Europe under the authority of a common faith and morality.

It is idle to lament over the "glamor that was Greece or the glory that was Rome" or the crumbling architectural achievements of the thirteenth century. It is equally idle to dream of establishing an ideal commonwealth of perfect human beings. This does not mean, however, that happiness is unattainable in this world. Man is a surprisingly adaptable creature and has repeatedly attained happiness in every conceivable environment. He can always make the best of a bad situation. He can surmount the obstacles that make for discomfort or frustration, and utilize the more favorable elements in surroundings that are intolerable. Above all he can create good out of evil. Many of the most conspicuous leaders in this and other ages have sprung from the lowliest origin and their characters have been formed in the school of hardship and suffering. It is within the power of every man to create his own golden age in the place and time in which he was born.

Still, individual happiness is not everything. All men of good-will must have a permanently troubled conscience over the maladjustments and inequalities of the social order in which they live. Yet the ordinary individual, the average man, cannot but feel singularly helpless and ineffective in the face of the critical economic and social needs of our country. What can he do? He can pay taxes more or less grudgingly. He can vote as dictated to by political bosses, demagogs or newspapers; but his vote seems to accomplish little. He can attend political meetings, write to the newspapers or to his representatives in Congress. He might even occasionally, in some access of boldness, write to the President. He knows that the real influence is exerted by powerful minority groups.

One move, however, he can make which will be fraught with tremendous consequence. He can throw himself with all his heart and soul and mind into the cause of the Catholic Church. Thereby his puny strength will be multiplied a thousand fold. Every time he enters a church to pray, or goes to confession or Communion, he is contributing his share toward increasing the impact made by the Church upon the life of the nation. He is linking his puny individual efforts with the almighty power of God. The Catholic Church is the visible manifestation on earth of the kingdom of God. For nineteen centuries it has exerted a molding and constructive influence upon civilization. Its power has never been greater or more widespread than today. Moreover, the Catholic Church has a clear-cut social program which has been repeatedly set forth by the Pope and the bishops. This program is anti-plutocratic and anti-communistic. It is based on belief in human spirituality and freedom. It demands a more equitable distribution of the world's wealth. It seeks to apply to all human activities the eternal principles of the Divine Justice.

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HOLY WEEK IN SEVILLE

By MAX FISCHER

THE STRETCH between Madrid and Seville, a matter of twelve hours for an express train, was covered by our plane in two. A weather-beaten Castilian, with a face for all the world like that of a genuine conquistador, was at the helm. Landscape always seems fresh and impressive when one sees it from an airship; and here there was first of all the relief of the Castilian foothills, and then Toledo just below—neat and quaint as a giant toy, an island of houses pressed together by an encircling stream, and round about an almost houseless region. The country grew more and more arid, more and more thinly populated. We climb over the bleak Sierras, and below us are lonely vales practically deserted excepting for an occasional farm or the trace of a road down which an automobile seems to creep (for we are doing a hundred miles an hour). But at length we get over the last mountain peak, and suddenly the Andalusian plain is at our feet, vividly green and sown with gleaming white houses. In a little while we have reached the banks of the Guadalquivir and have flown over stately Seville to the air field.

"He who has not seen Seville, has not seen the miraculous," says an ancient Spanish proverb. The native Spaniard as well as the foreigner agree that Seville and Granada are the cities most worth seeing in this country. They are its Naples and Venice. Being of a more serious turn of mind, the Castilian lauds the "merriment" of these Andalusian cities and the rest of the world echoes that verdict. But to me it seems that the rhythm of Seville is energetic rather than joyous. The people who live here have a great deal of Arabian and Jewish blood in their veins, they are complicated psychically as are all mixed races. In their great dark eyes shines not the *joie de vivre* which races in the blood of the Italian, the Catalan or the man of Southern France. One sees rather the sun-ripened melancholy of Semitic peoples.

The war of the Catholic kings against Arabians and Jews was a religious and not a racial struggle. The prize at stake was an idea. No one sought then to drive persons of alien blood from the soil of Europe, but all was wagered to complete the triumph of the Cross over the Half Moon. It can also be demonstrated that a large part of the Semitic population sought baptism more or less voluntarily and were speedily assimilated by the Christian elements. The alien blood thus introduced, remained, however, an active ferment in the life of southern Spain. The influence of Moorish culture is recognizable even today in Seville as one observes the architecture of the houses, the attitude toward woman, the individuality of Andalusian music, poetry and dancing. Even such a detail as the custom of washing hands ceremoniously before dinner testifies to the continuity of that influence.

Where was the palace of Spain's Catholic king, when he visited the metropolis of Andalusia? Inside the alabaster pillars of the Alcazar, of course—in the resplendent rooms created by Arabian interior decorators, which retain to this day some of the charm of the "Thousand and One Nights." The Alcazar is the most impressive structure erected by the Moors, after the Alhambra, and is in every sense a marvelous symphony of arabesque. It is worlds removed from modern rhythm, this place of oriental magic with fairy gardens, boxwood and leaping fountains, subtropical shrubbery, brightly colored birds, cool courts embosomed in the house itself, and unbelievable flowers blossoming in old pottery jars.

Yet though the charms of Moorish zest for beauty and comfort embellish this city, it has an obvious Christian purpose, being a town of stately churches rich in treasures, of majestic processions, of fervent worshipers. Now during the *Semana Santa,* the Holy Week, Seville is in the feverish excitement of great religious services which determine the contours of public life. Automobile and wagon traffic has ceased. The streets are cleared for the processions, in which old and young, rich and poor, lovers of life and the weary, are caught up in a mood of self-surrender.

No one who repudiates the Catholic tradition of Spain will ever understand this country. Despite revolution and "liberal thought," there is no other land in Europe where church and religious activity so completely dominate every-day life or exercise so great an effect on thought and sentiment. The power of Catholic faith has welded very different peoples into a unit on this peninsula—the Basques of the Pyrenean region, the half-Provençal Catalans, the semi-Portuguese Galicians, the largely Semitic Spaniards of the South. If there is a nation which rests not on racial homogeneity but on a fundament of selfsame language and cultural destiny, that nation is the Spanish people.

The picture unfolded by the solemn processions which throng the streets of Seville between Palm Sunday and Holy Saturday is extraordinarily colorful—is, indeed, almost a work of art. In the days of Diocletian this city was renowned for the prodigality of the ritual according to which it served Venus, but during these many past Catholic centuries its festivals have kept the motif of the Cross. One cannot help noticing that even today a genuine delight in the senses characterizes these processions in honor of Jesus Crucified, strange and not infrequently obnoxious to Protestant sensibilities.

Now it is the peculiar genius of Catholicism to absorb life in all its breadth and depth; and this is especially true in Spain, where religion is less sicklied over with the pale cast of thought than anywhere else in Europe. Faith in God the Father and in His Son the Redeemer abides in the hearts of this people as an ineradicable certitude. Out of their hearts comes the yearning to give evidence of that faith—to make tempestuous and public profession of it, marching through the streets, singing hymns athrob with fervor, taking the objects of religious devotion out of the churches in order to honor, glorify and display them.

In Seville, as in the rest of Spain, though possibly even more than in the rest of Spain, the cult of the Vir-

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gin Mother flourishes. She is the soother of troubled souls, the refuge to whom come all in bitter need. For this reason, say the people, Mary has an especial fondness for Seville and its environs. Most prayers are said in chapels dedicated to her; and no other image is to be seen so frequently above house doors as that of Our Lady of Mercy. The district of Seville is *la tierra de Maria Santissima.* She is the patroness of the city and a thousand prose legends as well as a hundred thousand poems pay tribute to her dignity, her kindliness and her interventions.

The statues and pictures in the churches are bathed in religious veneration that does not always distinguish pedantically between reality and representation. Now and then the image seems to have been rendered sacred by the religious aspiration directed toward it, and by the magical power which it reflects. Lay brotherhoods bear statues out into the streets, so that all men may share in their holiness and take part in their praise. Men who ordinarily beware of carrying even the smallest parcel, since that would degrade a nobleman or rich burgher, consider it honorable to pant and perspire under the burden of a miraculous image which they help carry. Each brotherhood has its own "Christ" and "Madonna," which it brings to the public attention with real pride and joy.

On the streets efforts are made to win new admirers for a favorite statue. When processions meet, a genuinely Homeric combat begins. The parties laud in fiery words the beauty, nobility, holiness and miraculous powers of *their* Madonnas, each seeking to cast doubt on the relative value of other images. These disputes, which are half theological and half esthetic, often end in controversies about quite naively realistic matters—the fact that the tears of one Madonna are larger than those of another, or the comparative excellence of a Madonna with small hands and a tall figure. But as soon as the debate threatens to become a fistic encounter, some priest is on hand to pour oil on the troubled waters and to suggest that after all the statues are merely reflections of the Mother gloriously enthroned in heaven. Whether the masses pause to consider this truth in all its aspects is, of course, doubtful—so dependent is the Castilian on sense impressions.

I have heard some foreigners remark that these practises are "heathenish." It seems to me rather that they contain in them the fervent religious conviction which animates this people and seeks to find expression. A living social bond of representations understood and cherished by all, ties each of these people to the others. The processions pass even the prisons, where the convicts are glued, as it were, to the windows, hungrily trying to catch a glimpse of favorite Madonnas. Thus are the forgotten and the outcast reunited with the community in the possession of a common faith. And little children, still clinging to the colored balloons or figurines which recall the feast, go to bed happy and dream of heaven and angels.

One who looks more deeply will not be misled by the southern vivaciousness of Seville street scenes into confusing the expansiveness of this city with the frivolity of Naples. Seville is a picturesque city: the comb and mantilla worn by every woman inside the home but publicly only on festival days gives everything a peculiarly decorative cast. The Calle de Serpes, which is the main thoroughfare, is closed to traffic and always crammed with talkative, promenading human beings who render it literally impossible for someone in a hurry to move at better than a snail's pace. Along the streets are tables and chairs in the open air, served by the waiters of a club, a café or a bar. If you were to seat yourself there, you would drink a *Manzinilla* or a vermouth, a glass of beer or a cup of chocolate, meanwhile reading the paper in comfort and munching an olive from the end of a toothpick. Allowing the *limpiabotas*—the shoe-shiners—to affix a festival radiance to your shoes, you would be besieged at every moment by venders of eatables, toilet articles and sentimental novels, a hundred lottery tickets would be shoved under your nose, and quite innumerable beggars would clamor for something. A blind man might well take position before your table and strum a very, very sad ditty on his dilapidated guitar, while his agile associate darted from table to table in quest of contributions. Not to be outdone, another who has caught the drift of modern progress and learned the advantages of technology, may plant a phonograph on a tripod and turn on scratchy jazz for your benefit.

When evening comes the countless cabarets and dives are filled. The cheaper and more vulgar the place is, the more vigorously and violently do the patrons dance. All throw off restraint, but there is seldom any raucous noise or boorishness, for even the simplest Spaniard cherishes the *caballero* in his heart. Next morning these very same masses now surrendering so enthusiastically to the charms of sense, will kneel in church, humble and contrite. There is zest and lust for life in this land, thirst for beauty and enjoyment—but there rests upon it the shadow of the Cross. Seville has room for the smiling Madonnas of Murillo and the bitter sermons of Valdes Leal.

The Magdalene Speaks

"I who had sought Him when the night was old
And reached His tomb with the first light of dawn,
I who had thought to find Him still and cold
Found angels there and Christ, my loved One, gone.
Weak with my loss a stranger's form I meet—
Too dim my eyes with tears to know Him fair.
Eager the steps that bring me to His feet.
'Gone is my Lord, in pity tell me where?'

'Mary'—the Master's voice. 'Mary,' my name
On lips that loved it when, knowing no shame,
I went to Him in Simon's house one night.
'Mary.' A rapture and a wave of swift delight—
'Rabonni, Jesu!' Low my answering cry.
'Rabonni, Jesu!' Spent at Thy feet I lie."

SISTER AGNES OF ASSISI.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—In a demonstration, April 7, in which the French and German Ambassadors to the Holy See and representatives of the British and Italian legations participated, the Holy Father led 30,000 persons in St. Peter's Basilica in prayers for peace. In cooperation with the Catholic University of America a world-wide plea for peace by five Princes of the Church will be heard over the Columbia Broadcasting network, April 20, from 12 noon to 1 p. m. Eastern Standard Time. William Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston, Joseph Cardinal MacRory, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland, Jean Cardinal Verdier, Archbishop of Paris, Cintra Cardinal Leme da Silviera, Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro, and Theodore Cardinal Innitzer, Archbishop of Vienna, will urge the nations of the world to settle their differences without recourse to arms. * * * In a Lenten pastoral to parents in the Diocese of Great Falls, Montana, the Most Reverend Edwin V. O'Hara declared, "By the Sacrament of Marriage Catholic parents receive special graces not given to Pope, bishop, priests or teaching religious, to enable them to teach religion to their children." * * * Alsace is said to be "the world's greatest nursery of missionaries." With a Catholic population of only 840,000 Alsace now has in active foreign missionary service, one Apostolic Delegate, 13 vicars and 16 prefects apostolic, 700 priests, 300 Brothers and 500 Sisters. There are also 900 seminarians preparing for the foreign missions and 300 novices in training for the work in the various religious congregations. * * * The Holy Father has bestowed the Apostolic Blessing on the Catholic Campaigners for Christ, with headquarters in Boston, who have held over 1,300 open-air meetings in all parts of this country to bring the message of the Church to the man in the street. * * * The *Linacre Quarterly,* official journal of the Federated Catholic Physicians' Guild, notes that 27 of the 48 states have sterilization laws and advocates amendments exempting Catholics from the application of such laws and similar bills proposed in other states.

The Nation.—Dust storms led to the closing of schools in Oklahoma, continued a long and devastating siege of Kansas and halted automobile traffic in parts of Texas. In the Denver, Colorado, region, which has been steadily harassed by dust storms, these were giving place to rain, while in other parts of the Rocky Mountain region there was snow. Many parts of the Middle West, where the covering blanket of prairie grass has been for years plowed up for crops and subjected to a more than usual rapidity of weathering and erosion, have been suffering from what has seemed to the natives a major cataclysm of nature, in which their farms are whirled into the air and deposited in drifts like the sands of the Sahara in neighboring states. * * * Comptroller Frank J. Taylor of New York City sold $50,000,000 of city bonds at the most favorable interest rate the city has obtained for a long-term security since 1905. * * * The Aluminum Company of America and the International Aluminum Cartel were said in a report by the National Industrial Relations Board to be in a combination in restraint of trade and for the domination of all aluminum prices. Aluminium, Ltd., of Canada, a corporation formed in 1928, was the same as the plants and holdings of the Aluminum Company of America in Canada prior to that date, the report said, and a chart was submitted which showed that the family and associates of Andrew W. Mellon, at that time Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, controlled 63.2 percent of the stock of the American company and 73.3 percent of the Aluminium, Ltd. "It is not surprising that, although Canada is the world's largest aluminum exporter, this country has never competed in the United States market with domestic aluminum," said the report. Mr. Mellon, following his resignation as Secretary of the Treasury, was appointed by former President Hoover Ambassador to Great Britain. He is now on trial for evasion of income tax payment. His attorney brought out that Mr. Mellon at the time in question made educational and charitable gifts from 1931 to 1933 amounting to more than $2,500,000 and that he had had in the back of his mind to give $3,000,000 in old masters to a projected National Art Gallery. * * * Tornadoes ravaged Louisiana and Mississippi, killing twenty-six and injuring 150.

The Wide World.—On April 11 diplomatic representatives of France, Great Britain and Italy will meet at Stresa, Italy, to discuss the situation created by Germany's resolve to arm in violation of the Versailles Treaty. It was reported that Captain Eden would be unable to attend because of illness, and that Sir John Simon would sponsor British addiction to a policy of watchful waiting. Premiers of all three nations plan to attend. * * * The Danzig elections failed to give the Nazis control of the city council. As a matter of fact, they secured less than 60 percent of the total vote. The Center party virtually maintained its strength. One impressive detail was the flight of Dr. Hermann Rauschning, German conservative, who was the first Nazi mayor of Danzig, after publishing a letter warning his fellow citizens against endorsing unlimited Hitlerite rule. * * * In Catholic churches of Germany, a prayer was read in which God was asked to safeguard the faithful against false prophets, "who withdraw from the people the truth of dogma and burden them with fables and myths." The seventieth birthday of General Ludendorff was the occasion for government overtures to this enemy of the Church. * * * A record-breaking crop of spies was reported from all parts of Europe. French and German courts were trying leaders of alleged rings,

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Belgium sentenced two men to prison terms for having aided the German government, and Switzerland was said to harbor a veritable nest of pryers into everything. * * * Preparations for any military emergency continued apace. The French moved 60,000 more troops up to the "ring of steel" extending north and south of Metz; barbed-wire entanglements were set up and trenches dug. Austria prepared to ask permission of the League of Nations to equip and maintain a volunteer army of 100,000 men. Added to the budgets of various other countries were sums to be expended for further armament. * * * Ethiopia petitioned the League of Nations to settle disputes pending between her government and Italy. The ruler declared, however, that every man in his realm was prepared to die in its defense.

* * * *

The Work of the K. of C.—In the course of their present Mobilization for Catholic Action the Knights of Columbus are sending out a folder which briefly suggests the scope and variety of their work in the United States and Canada. Local councils play a prominent part in parish activities, arranging laymen's retreats, Communion Sundays and memorial Masses. They also provide considerable material relief to the needy and assist the poor in securing the aid to which they are entitled from the proper welfare authorities. A number of councils conduct courses in religion, history, sociology and economics, while games, track meets and a variety of athletic contests are also sponsored to promote wholesome recreation and good sportsmanship. One of the order's special works is Catholic Boy Guidance. It has established a professional postgraduate course in the subject at the University of Notre Dame and provided over 100 scholarships there. Evening Boyology Institutes have been held in 135 cities to instruct 30,000 men in the technique of successful boy guidance. The Knights of Columbus contribute generously to alleviate distress in the case of national disasters and supply many a willing worker for the Community Chest, the Red Cross and the Boy Scouts. They have been zealous workers in the Legion of Decency campaign and the fight against religious persecution in Mexico. Membership in the order entails access to a low cost fraternal insurance plan which provides noteworthy protection against old age and family destitution. Reports from only a few of the 2,000 councils engaged in the present mobilization disclosed 7,000 applications for membership in the first five days of the campaign.

War Profits and Mobilization.—On April 9 the House went ahead of the Senate in the current movement against war profits and for war mobilization, and sent to the upper chamber the McSwain War Profits Bill. Representative McSwain has been working sixteen years for some such measure. The bill was almost cut in two the last day when the series of mobilization amendments passed the previous Saturday were deleted. At that time authoritarian provisions which among other things gave the President power to conscript about 23,000,000 men, that is, all males between twenty-one and forty-five, as well as all industrial managers, were passed in a flurry of enthusiasm which some diagnosed as pacifistic and others as Fascist-militaristic. As passed, the bill permits the President to freeze prices, rents, compensations; to "commandeer [not conscript] material and financial resources, industrial organization and public services" deemed necessary for the prosecution of the war. He may close exchanges, license all manufacturing, trade and public services except the press. The tax provisions are left open so that the Senate can fill them in. The bill waiting in the Senate, inspired by John T. Flynn on its economic side, has seven titles. Its tax, commodities and exchange control, and financial sections are contained in four titles which will probably be accepted by the House. Two titles deal with the drafting of industrial management and the conscription of property and the fixing of prices and the licensing of business, which the House bill treats in its own way. These are the questions which deal more with the authority of the government than with the profits of war, and which aroused debates in the House of Representatives.

The Mexican Situation.—His Excellency, Archbishop Ruiz y Flores, has authorized a petition to American Catholics for funds to aid the children of Mexico. Little change in the general situation was reported this week. Writing in *Today* (April 13, 1935), Mr. Raymond Moley declared: "No liberal can fail to regret the excesses to which official Mexico has carried its religious policy. It seems to be an eternal rule of history that what begins as warfare upon a church as an institution ultimately degenerates into a war on religion itself as an attitude of mind. Then, having sought to cast God out of the minds of their subjects as an object of worship and veneration, there follows inevitably the attempt of the rulers to make themselves the beneficiaries of the human tendency to offer loyalty to a higher power. Man, cloaked with a bit of authority, dethrones God only to seek godship himself. . . . In the face of official assurances that the people are quietly accepting, and even enthusiastically backing, the Mexican government in its anti-religious and socialistic education policies, considerable significance attaches, it seems to me, to the fact that in Guadalajara some ten thousand persons had the moral courage to turn out and brave death, injury and prison to make their nonconformity articulate. That the opposition to these policies is serious is further indicated by evidences that the government is not wholly assured of its ability to withstand the opposition it has stirred up." *Today* is publishing a series of articles on the Mexican situation, by Robert Hammond Murray.

Adolph S. Ochs (1858-1935).—The late publisher of the New York *Times* was born of an accomplished German liberal family in Cincinnati, Ohio. He had little formal schooling, but began work as an office boy at the age of eleven with a newspaper in Knoxville, Tennessee. He was soon promoted to delivery boy at $1.50 a week. After a year or two in a grocery store and a drug store he became a printer's devil for the Knoxville *Chronicle*.

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He was convinced that the city of Chattanooga had great possibilities and after various newspaper jobs—in the composing room, as a reporter and as a business manager—he was appointed receiver of the Chattanooga *Dispatch*. At the age of twenty, with a working capital of $37.50, he took over the Chattanooga *Times* and without asking any favors made a sizable profit the very first year. In 1883, Mr. Ochs married Miss Effie Miriam Wise. Thirteen years later he mortgaged everything he had to acquire the New York *Times*. In an era of yellow journalism he announced that he would provide a clean, temperate and impartial presentation of the news with higher standards in advertising. For the first two years he had great difficulty meeting his weekly payroll, but nevertheless refused handsome advertising and editorial offers from Tammany Hall and the Republican National Committee in order to uphold his reputation for independence. The financial success of the *Times* was assured at the end of the third year and Mr. Ochs continued to direct it as long as he lived. A zealous member of the reformed Jewish faith, Mr. Ochs has to his credit many achievements besides raising the standards of American journalism. His support made possible the publication of the "Dictionary of American Biography." In 1912, he founded the Hundred Neediest Cases Fund, which at the Christmas of 1930 attained a sum of $345,790. He has done much to develop the national parks. Mr. Ochs received many honors, the most cherished the title of Citizen Emeritus of Chattanooga, conferred in 1928.

On the Agricultural Front.—That Catholic groups are taking the rural life movement seriously is evident from a report of activities in the Archdiocese of St. Louis. According to the *Catholic Herald* and *Rural Bureau Notes,* pastors of better situated parishes collected more than $15,000 during the last five months of 1934, to aid schools and churches in impoverished towns. What could be done with so little money seems quite amazing. The archdiocese has also been very active in promoting vacation schools, in which children who attend the "little red schoolhouses" during the year are given religious instruction during a period ranging from three to six weeks. Last summer a total of 1,496 pupils were taught by sixty-three Sisters. A farm listing service has also been maintained, to help young men who think of settling on the land to find farms within reach of a church. "At the present time," says the *Catholic Herald,* "the conference has 230 pieces of property listed and described." In cooperation with the Central Verein, the conference has also promoted the establishment of parish credit unions. This is an idea which is interesting Catholic observers more and more, since the value of the credit union has been well demonstrated by the depression. Failures were at a minimum in banks thus conducted, and the result has been a marked increase in the number of these "institutions for men in overalls." Today there are more than 3,000 individual credit unions in the United States, with 500,000 members and assets of nearly $75,000,000. In southern Missouri pastors have actively supported the credit union idea as a way of killing off the "loan shark." The unions existing there are not affiliated with, but are supported by, parishes.

The Conferences of Notre Dame.—Recently in the Cathedral of Notre Dame of Paris, the centenary of the first Lenten *conférence* of Lacordaire was celebrated. Cardinal Verdier of Paris, the Apostolic Nuncio, five archbishops and bishops, a mitred abbot, the Minister, Louis Marin, generals and Academicians were in the gathering honoring the great preacher. The Master General of the Dominicans, the Very Reverend Martin Gillet, whose order Lacordaire joined in 1840, delivered the sermon, on the liberty of belief, teaching and association. Ever since Lacordaire preached, the Lenten and Advent *conférences* of Notre Dame have been major means of presenting the truths of the Church, and the life of the Church in relation to the most absorbing contemporary secular problems. Lacordaire first became prominent in connection with the paper, *L'Avenir,* which he edited with the Abbé de Lamennais and Montalembert, and which was a very liberal paper, both in politics and (it was decided) in doctrine. The paper was condemned by the Pope in 1832. Lamennais never made full and sincere submission, but Lacordaire (as also Montalembert, the lay historian, politician and controversialist) did, and he took up preaching in place of writing to propagate his orthodox religious views and his still liberal politics. Frederic Ozanam and the first group of St. Vincent de Paul listened to him at the Collège Stanislas, and in 1835 prevailed upon the still somewhat cautious Archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur Louis de Quelen, to entrust to him the Lenten series at Notre Dame. After two years, during which he established himself as the greatest preacher of the century, Lacordaire went to Rome and there joined the Dominicans. He returned to France, reestablished the order there, and continued his *conférences* until the formation of the Second Empire in 1852. He left Paris then because he wished to prevent the Church from becoming identified with the empire. He died in 1861, after making the remark that he hoped to die "as a penitent religious and an impenitent liberal."

Edwin Arlington Robinson (1859-1935).—"Robinson's death made few newspaper headlines," remarked a fellow poet, "but he is one of the half-dozen living Americans who will be widely remembered in a hundred years." If literary and critical history afford any parallel, this remark is justified. Born at Head Tide, Maine, Robinson eventually went to Harvard. His first two volumes of verse, "The Torrent and the Night Before" (1896) and "The Children of the Night" (1897) went practically unnoticed, and are today great rarities. Some ventures in poetic drama followed. His real fame began with the publication of "The Man against the Sky" (1916), which was one of the major contributions to the "renaissance of lyric poetry" at that time. Later on Robinson essayed narrative verse on a grand scale, and rewrote some Arthurian legends in terms of modern

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ideology. "Tristram" (1927) attracted the most attention. Concerning these ventures there was a great deal of difference of opinion. The attitude of *Poetry* and affiliated organs was frankly hostile, but the most professional critics were enthusiastic. Three separate Pulitzer Prizes were conferred on the poet, who nevertheless clung to his reticent habits. For many years his address was Ledoux and Company, New York. Nevertheless he had a group of distinguished friends. Robinson's body was cremated. This was the second notable instance of "poetic ashes," the other being occasioned by the cremation of the body of Sara Teasdale.

Catholic Press Exhibit.—An International Exhibition of the Catholic Press opens this month in the Vatican City. The exhibition in itself will be an example of modern propaganda methods, of dramatic visualization and of non-scholastic educational techniques. There will be a general section displaying the history and contemporary development of the technical elements, such as the transmission of news, the service of correspondence, editing, administrative organization, and the training of journalists. The second section will be made up of national pavilions. The cooperating countries will furnish illustrations of the progress of their national Catholic press including documentation of the principal press campaign carried on in defense of the Church and her institutions. They will show statistical data indicating the present state of the Catholic press and initiatives undertaken and typical characteristics worthy of study or imitation; and finally they will try to tell the services that the Catholic press renders the Church and Catholic life in all fields in each nation. The Sacred Congregation of Propaganda will gather the material for mission countries. The third section is called the "systematical section" and will group publications according to contents. Publications of Catholic Action and of missionary propaganda have the place of honor. Besides these main sections there will be a certain number of special departments showing work in particular fields in detail.

* * * *

Building.—The report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics on the value of buildings for which permits were issued during the full year, 1934, emphasizes again the appalling debacle of the building industry, which in itself is a major depression. In New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit and Los Angeles, the five greatest cities of the country, the total value of construction in 1934 was 7 percent as much as in 1925. However, 1934 was better than 1933. It was the first year since 1925 to show an increase over the preceding year in the number and value of new buildings. New residential buildings decreased 9.5 percent in number and 12.7 percent in cost; new non-residential construction decreased 2 percent in number and 1.4 percent in cost; but additions, alterations and repairs increased 11.6 percent in number and 29.4 percent in cost, to bring an increase in total numbers of 7.3 percent, and in cost of 5.5 percent. During the year new dwelling units were provided for 29,908 families. Of these, 68.2 percent were in one-family dwellings, 7.4 percent in two-family dwellings, and 24.4 percent in apartment houses. This is in contrast to the proportions during the boom. In 1928, only 35.2 percent of the family units constructed were in one-family dwellings, while 53.7 percent were in apartment houses. In New York City the total value of new construction in 1934 was $96,661,717, and in 1925, $1,020,604,713.

The New Deal Marches On.—The latest analysis released by the Federal Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce showed that employment and payrolls, farm income and distribution and business conditions improved in February and into March. Compared with 1934, the general index was up 12 percent for the first two months of this year. Major gains were in the automobile, iron, steel and glass business. Declines or slight changes from last year were in the cement, lumber, tobacco manufacturing, leather, shoe manufacturing and certain food processing industries. The textile industry showed an improvement of 14 percent. Factory employment was up 3.2 percent in February, while payrolls increased 7.8 percent. These gains exceeded the usual seasonal increase, and the adjusted employment index rose to within one point of the highest figure reached in 1934. The payroll index, which is not adjusted for seasonal movements, rose to the highest figure since June, 1931. A well-known commentator summed up that although things were not Utopian, solid progress was being made in the United States "in spite of the second-guessers, detractors and trouble makers."

The Sporting Unemployed.—The strange situation described as technological unemployment in the United States, which is sometimes erroneously described as overproduction, has apparently led to notable developments of non-commercially competitive human activity. The National Recreation Association recently made public a report showing that public demand in the United States for organized and free sports, drama, music, crafts and other recreations has been greatly increasing. In short, the unemployed, or part-time employed, instead of sitting around in their poverty-stricken homes brooding in despair or hatred, have been gotten into activity which does not produce commodities which, by competing with commodities of people regularly employed, aggravate the unemployment situation. Municipal recreation centers were used by 1,624,000 young people and adults in 1934. Children under seventeen, to the number of 5,000,000, played in public playgrounds last summer. In arts and crafts, 400,000 persons were enrolled under public auspices, while 84,000 engaged in various forms of communal dramatics. Tennis players numbered 984,000, while 612,000 children and young people played baseball and 400,000 basketball. The association's consultation service received 40 percent more requests for advice and suggestions on recreational methods and activities than in 1933. The number of communities now served totals 5,922. Howard S. Braucher is the executive secretary; the address is 315 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

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The Play

By GRENVILLE VERNON

Cornelia Otis Skinner

IF ONE were to call Cornelia Otis Skinner the American Yvette Guilbert, one would pay each of these superb artists a compliment, for in their own fields each is supreme. Mme. Guilbert is in her art essentially the democrat, a true daughter of the people. In the depiction of midinettes, cocottes, girls of the peasantry, the dregs of the Paris streets, even of the *petite bourgeoise,* the great French *diseuse* has revealed a gallery of portraits, tragic, comic, pathetic, gay, which have had no equal. Truly may it be said that Yvette Guilbert has exalted the humble, not always spiritually it is true, but by making them live with such intensity that once seen they never can be forgotten. Cornelia Skinner on the other hand is essentially an aristocrat, and though some of her girls of the people are magnificently etched, she always, when she is at her best, gives them something, a brilliance of spirit, a grace of bearing or of manner, which raises them above their station. In past seasons we have seen her in "The Loves of Charles II" and in "The Wives of Henry the Eighth," and we have marveled at both her historical sense and her mastery of character. This year she has added a new play, like the others written and acted entirely by herself—"Mansion on the Hudson."

The scene is laid at Tall Trees, a large estate on the Hudson, and the action takes place in the living-room of the house. In the first scene it is 1880. Mrs. Stanley Howland, neglected by her husband, is about to run away with the man who loves her, but at the last moment is prevented by an accident to her son, De Witt. The second scene is 1898. Mrs. Stanley Howland, jr., is a young Southern woman who has never been made quite at home by the Howlands, and the scene ends as she learns of the death of her husband in the Spanish-American War. The third scene is the winter of 1920, and Carrie Howland, an acidulous old maid, is selling the house where she has lived all her life, ruined by the gambling of her brother, De Witt. The next scene is seven years later and now a vulgar Irishwoman, Mrs. Joseph Kelly, who has bought the house, is giving a party to an ill-assorted gathering, and at the end her son comes in, having been expelled from Princeton for cheating. Scene 5 shows a new tenant of the house, the young wife of Tony, the Howlands' gardener, who has turned the mansion into a gambling house. Tony's wife discovers that her husband is having an affair with a young singer and sends the singer away. The final scene is laid the following evening and depicts a young society woman who is gambling, and who so humiliates the aged De Witt Howland by telling him his pictures are trash that he drops dead.

This outline gives merely the bare bones of the action, but what counts is Miss Skinner's magnificent differentiation of the six women. It would be difficult to say which is the most effectively drawn—the dignity and poignancy of the first Mrs. Howland, the stark and bitter Carrie, the vulgar Mrs. Kelly, the beautiful and pathetic young Italian woman, or the callous and sophisticated society girl. Sally, the younger and Southern Mrs. Howland, is the only figure that doesn't quite satisfy.

What is the secret of Miss Skinner's art? She is of course a mistress of make-up and costuming, but these are only the externals. She possesses beauty and distinction of bearing, but these also are only the tools for her imagination, her subtlety of understanding, her emotional power, her intellectual insight. There is in such portraits as that of the first Mrs. Howland and of the Italian girl an inner radiance which seems to lighten the stage the instant she appears, and this is perhaps her highest quality. Yet she is none the less sure in her realistic touch, the touch which brings to life the old maid, the rich vulgarian, and the socety girl. In short, her art is truly protean, and her ability to make a monolog seem a living play, and to make the other actors, though they do not speak, seem to be present and almost equally living, stamps her as an interpretive actress of the first order.

When to this is added the fact that she is a creative artist as well, that she writes her plays as well as plays them, we get an idea of the extraordinary talent of this young woman, a talent which often rises to what is very near to genius. There are those who would say that Cornelia Otis Skinner is in interpretive power the leading actress on the American stage. I am not sure that I am not one of those who hold her thus. (At the Booth Theatre.)

The Dominant Sex

THIS play by a young Irish playwright, Michael Egan, has an excellent idea, but it is an idea for a novel rather than the theatre. It tells the story of the hobbling of a young inventor, Dick Shale, by the very feminine wiles of his wife, Angela, who is determined to do with his future as she wishes by the deadly arts of wheedling and reiteration of her ideas. Now in the theatre an idea may be repeated once, or perhaps twice, but when it is repeated every few minutes boredom becomes the result. The characters in the play are real, but as they talk and repeat in talk rather than suggest and act, we soon begin to yawn. Had Mr. Egan written a novel it might very well have proved amusing, for his method in "The Dominant Sex" is that of the novel and not of the stage. This is a pity, for there is much good writing and the actors and actresses are excellent, especially Helen Chandler as Angela, Bramwell Fletcher as Dick, and A. E. Matthews as Joe Clayton. When Mr. Matthews is on the stage, too, the play takes on life, not only because of the skilful performance of the actor himself, but because Clayton is the only figure visualized in terms of the theatre. When he is present things happen, not so much to the plot, but to the characters themselves, even those thrown into contact with Clayton. But, alas, he appears only for a short time and in only two of the acts. (At the Cort Theatre.)

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Communications

THE SACRED SEASON

Green Bay, Wis.

TO the Editor: For a number of years I have been an enthusiastic reader of THE COMMONWEAL and have zealously defended it against the charge, not infrequently heard in clerical circles, that your review is a promoter of religious snobbishness. If, however, your editorial entitled "The Sacred Season" is to be taken as typical of your attitude toward ecclesiastical discipline and religious practise, it is evident that I owe an apology to your detractors.

The writer of the editorial in question looks at Lent as observed by the Church today and confesses that he is bored. The Church, it seems, has practically forbidden him to fast, and he finds that abstinence merely means the slight annoyance of remembering to order fish on specified days. True, one could abstain from the theatre, tobacco and cocktails, but it would often be "socially inconvenient." As for daily Mass, Stations of the Cross, Lenten courses and the like, he is such a busy person that "a hasty few moments snatched from work seem insignificant." He sighs for a retirement from self and the world for forty days "as is the case in monastic communities." In his spiritual desolation, however, he hits upon a happy thought: he will revive the custom of prayer and reading in common in his family circle. An hour of this daily throughout Lent will "bathe the household in life-giving spiritualness" and will become "a source of rest and blessedness, and also (in accordance with the right meaning of Lent) a satisfactory method of preparing for the joy of Easter day."

Does THE COMMONWEAL seriously advocate such a program for the Catholic laity in general or does it purport to be a review which should be read only by the financially privileged to whom Lenten menus are no problem, the socially superior to whom the theatre and cocktails are necessities of life, and the intellectually gifted who are too intelligent to derive any benefit from public devotions or a pastor's sermons and who have too keen an appreciation of the rubrics to be anything but annoyed by the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice in their parish church? That such a class of religious snobs exists you must be well aware. You will find them in some monastery chapel on Sunday mornings, at a retreat house during the parish mission, at a "conference" whenever there are evening devotions in their parish church. They are always ready to speak at Communion breakfasts, but you will never find them at the Communion railing with their parish societies. Is this the type of Catholic Action that THE COMMONWEAL seeks to promote? Or did the writer of the editorial in question speak with his tongue in his cheek and have no purpose at heart but the worthy cause of Lenten reading?

If he is serious in this matter I hope that he enjoys his experiment in spiritual bathing in the monastic seclusion of his own home. True, unless he is a manual laborer he is bound by the law of fasting, but his error is doubtless invincible. His theatre parties will of course be sanctified by the purity of his intention, and each Martini will be swallowed for the greater glory of God. The churches will be so crowded with the poor, the ignorant and the sweaty that he will not be missed; perhaps even the Lord will not notice his absence. No doubt he will be the better man for having observed Lent in his own quiet Lutheran way. My only concern, in fact, is for his wife and children. After a week of listening to the head of the house pray and read aloud for an hour each evening, I wonder will they not be tempted to remark (out of earshot of course) that Lent, in these modern circumstances, is likely to seem a perfect bore?

REV. THOMAS SMITH SULLIVAN, O. M. I.

ENTER—THE PARISH LIBRARY

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editor: Pioneer in the field of parochial libraries in the Archdiocese of Chicago is the St. Gertrude Parish Library. The progressive spirit of Reverend James A. Magner, spurred by the desire to foster and increase cultural Catholicity, and the understanding support of the pastor of St. Gertrude's, Reverend Bernard C. Heeney, were the foundation stones upon which has been builded a parish library.

To occupy these days of leisure in an age of gross materialism, development of Catholic literary culture through the medium of constructive reading may be furthered by the parish library. The depression has taken from Mr. and Mrs. Average Citizen financial means necessary for diversion and entertainment; deprived of accustomed recreation a substitute must be found and here "enters the parish library," solution in part, at least, of a serious problem and a bold challenge to inactivity. The encyclical of Pope Pius XI stressed a call to Catholic Action; the parish library is a response to this appeal.

The setting is a cheery room, carpeted in soft grey, with window-hangings striking the note of color contrast; well-filled bookstacks immediately identify its purpose, while modern lighting and cozy chairs invite inspection of the varied display of magazines and pamphlets arranged in orderly classification on library tables (this display already increasingly popular for reference material). The finest of Catholic contributors are here, and a wide range of worth-while secular publications is also offered. The librarian's record of the overwhelming popularity of the Catholic periodicals is worthy of note.

A glance at the bookstacks reflects an interesting selection of biography, autobiography, philosophy, religion, science, travel, poetry and fiction. The selection is all important. Closer perusal yields information that volumes carry oft-stamped date-slips, tangible proof of use.

Bulletin boards list news of current publications and criticisms of new books are posted. Book reviews are presented monthly and group discussions of these offerings are features of library service. Many of the books reviewed are selections of that splendid Catholic Book Club and of the Spiritual Book Associates, in both of which the library holds memberships.

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Equipped through concerted, earnest effort of a group from the St. Gertrude Study Club and Forum, enthusiasm in the Study Club is broadened and deepened through library channels. When Mrs. Maisie Ward Sheed lectured on the October program of the club, on "Newman and the Oxford Movement," the interest aroused was at once reflected in the library through the call for Newman's works.

Need for spreading cultural Catholicity in these days of materialism is evident. With the lack of adequate Catholic literature in the public libraries, so apparent, the parish library may act as a medium for the placing of this constantly growing literature in the hands of the people. It can make available for them, and accessible, knowledge of current Catholic thought and action. Youth, today, must have proper intellectual foundation if faith and culture are to be fostered. Adults must be given opportunity for comprehensive development to combat prevalent influences. Converts and "those along the way" have positive need of those authorities which will enlighten and strengthen. For all of these, the parish library, with ideals of service, can effectively further Catholic literary culture.

The circulation of the St. Gertrude Library has grown from the original lending of ten or twelve books, monthly, to the distributing of almost 150 volumes. This ever-increasing circulation points with definite directness to the success of one parish library. In response to the clarion call for Catholic Action of the Holy Father, Pius XI, the library of St. Gertrude, Chicago, answers with humility, "I serve."

JOSEPHINE RYAN MURPHY.

CARDINAL BOURNE

Notre Dame, Ind.

TO the Editor: I have read Mr. Dean's letter concerning Cardinal Bourne's origin and naturally accept the learned and highly esteemed editor's facts. There can then be no doubt that Mr. Henry Bourne was a highly efficient official in the post office and received an order of chivalry which is still amongst the few which are honorable to receive. We are probably at cross-meanings over the word "humble." I regard it as a great compliment. Mr. Dean, though he does not use the word, is anxious to prove the Cardinal was of "middle class." Certainly his family were not armigerous, unless the Catholic-staffed College of Heralds have been able to perform wonders of research. The good Henry Bourne appears to have had his mention in the papers as recorded by Mr. Dean, but I think he was not generally heard of until his son had attained sublime honors. If by "humble" is meant the working class I must withdraw the word and leave the Bourne family secure in the memory of their official achievements, although this does not put them with the "governing class." The English Civil Service is the finest in the world and the Bournes were as fine and conscientious public servants as could be found therein. So that is that.

Mr. Dean speculates on what might have happened had Mr. Bourne lived. He might have become a Knight? He might have become a Peer? Considering the making of modern Peers, this could scarcely be acclaimed as so great an honor as Mr. Dean thinks. It is true that Gladstone was admitting great men like Acton into the Peerage, but suppose Cardinal Bourne "in his later years might have been sitting in the House of Lords by hereditary right"—he might have found himself wondering whether it was not his duty to drive some of the money-changers out of the temple. It is no compliment to the Cardinal to imagine him sitting in the present assembly which includes bankrupts and convicts: and some worse than either!

The Cardinal's biographer will have a difficult duty but with application and a touch of genius he may lift his subject forever above the wash of laudation which has flowed around and about.

It is impossible for an Irishman to know what to write, and Englishmen must appraise one who made himself more English than the English. It suffices to say, as I ventured to say, that he is amongst the holy and the just.

History views the fact that he left the gulf between Irish and English Catholics a yawning one. I cannot but regret that Ireland was represented only by the Nuncio who made a solitary journey (as I am informed) from Dublin unaccompanied by a single Irish priest or bishop. On the other hand it may be construed as a subtle compliment that the British government was unrepresented at the Cardinal's funeral. As far as I have ben able to read I see that all the Catholic and some non-Catholic nations were represented. What an irony that the Irish Commissioner in London was present and that the government which the Cardinal served at home and abroad with such zeal and power sent not even an under-strapper from the Post Office!

From America it seems difficult to guess the reason. However, in this free country it may be permissible to hazard the libelous suggestion that Ramsay MacDonald remembered the day when the Cardinal broke the general strike by his authoritative utterances. On that occasion the Prime Minister was on the side of Communism and disorder. He must have enjoyed slighting the dead Cardinal from his perch at the top of the Conservative party.

SHANE LESLIE.

GETTING MONEY'S WORTH

Brookline, Mass.

TO the Editor: It is a question whether He who was "rejected of men," were He here today, would be welcome in the family of many a pillar of the church whose style of living differs no whit from him who never heard the call to service.

"Yes, we must get up another fair this year to raise money for orphans," says the dejected treasurer. "You can't get people to give directly. A little self-denial on cosmetics and sodas and cigarettes and theatre tickets, and we would have enough even from the people who are not rich, but somehow everyone wants to get something back for what he gives."

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The dowager who wears sparkling around her neck a necklace that would give a four-years' education to one hundred struggling students rarely knows that really educated people look at her with contempt. "Whoever bought her necklace would be just as selfish," someone retorts. No; not if the jewels were separately set and one owned by each of hundreds of engaged girls. Jewels, lace, all rich adornment per se, are innocent possessions; the ethical and economic evil comes when one person absorbs or consumes an immense amount of labor. Even then there may be a choice of evils. Ten men may toil for five years to produce a wonderful Persian rug; but if they enjoy the work and the product gives pleasure to many for 300 years, their artistic skill puts it in a very different category from the Kimberley diamonds, dug by ill-paid Negroes imprisoned in compounds. Only so much luxury as promotes efficiency and genuine happiness, or can be shared, has ethical warrant.

A man may with the noblest purpose refuse to give to every good cause, as did that benefactor of Marseilles who spent his life in gaining money to give his city an adequate water supply. He could not give smaller amounts, as he needed his whole fortune in order to carry out his scheme. Society may rightly demand that no one shall waste the results of toil or mock at human effort by consuming in an hour the result of months of labor, or by setting a regiment of able-bodied workers to provide for one parasitic member of the body politic. Mrs. Hetty Green, once the richest woman in America, lived penuriously and did no harm, though she refused to give. Her money, invested in railroads and mills, employed many in making what many could consume.

The rich man may spend his money wisely, the poor man foolishly, the only question is whether there is an adequate return for expenditure. Where there is no adequate return for money and labor, the national bookkeeper may be an embezzler of the nation's wealth. Mere circulation of money never increased wealth.

A vast deal of academic education may leave one childish as to the most vital issues. The World War was not created by illiterates, but by the most highly educated men in Christian countries. How to get money's worth involves a knowledge of the A B C of economics and ethics, but it has hardly found a place in school curricula or in the Christian pulpit. It has taken business men years to learn the truth of Benjamin Franklin's saying that "the worst thing you can do with a customer is to knock him on the head," and that if you want to sell, you must pay workers so that they can buy.

LUCIA AMES MEAD.

THE POPE'S PRAYER FOR PEACE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In your editorial of April 12 there is a serious error about the Triduum of Lourdes. You state that it begins on the Sunday after Easter, whereas it begins on the Friday after Easter and ends on the Sunday following.

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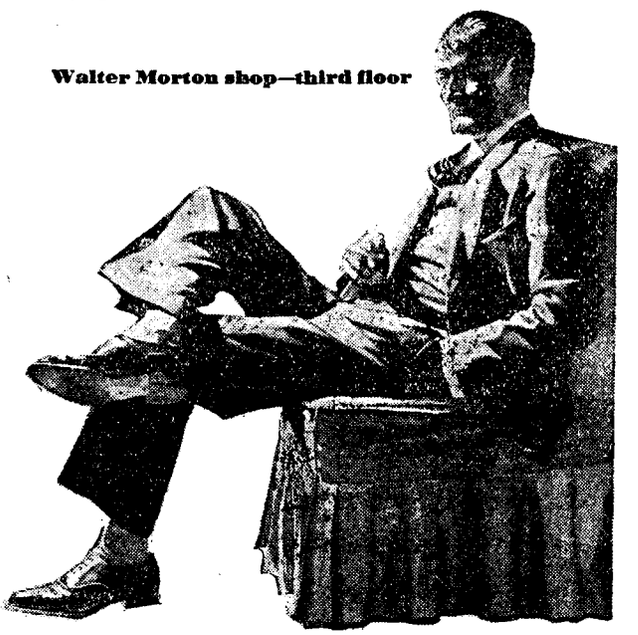

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Next Week

THE POLITICAL MAZE, by Oliver McKee, jr., considers the state of the nation's government. Mr. McKee is an experienced Washington observer and he sees realistically the elements of profit and loss. The world not yet having reached that millennium when everyone's path shall be "roses, roses all the way" and when in fact by a conspiracy of circumstances and a conspiracy of rapacious men, the paths of many are more thorny than rose strewn, there are mixed things which Mr. McKee exposes. In short, he does not indulge in that ivory tower private amusement of reducing complicated things to a simplism. . . . LITURGY AND LIFE, by W. Michael Ducey, is a correspondence from the Benedictine Collegio San Anselmo, in Rome. It is a very fine, life-giving paper. And it might be well to take this opportunity to correct an egregious error that crept into this column recently, when the liturgical observances described in our issue of March 15 in an article, "Peace in the Roman Catacombs," was ascribed to the Dominicans. This occasioned some little amusement in learned ecclesiastical circles and while we of course do not regret the amusement, we regret the unfortunate lapse of one of our minor employees. . . . PATRICK GEDDES, by Philip L. Boardman, is a thoroughly surprising account of an original Scotsman in the south of France with pedagogical innovations. . . . WHAT WILL EUROPE DO?, by George N. Shuster, begins, "Is Europe as close to the edge of another war as the happenings of recent weeks seem to indicate?" and the next to the last sentence says, "The sole possible hope is . . . . " What it concludes will be published in our next and will be well worth considering.

Books

Two Novels

Lean Men, by Ralph Bates. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

Road of Ages, by Robert Nathan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

CERTAIN dissimilarities are immediately apparent between these two books: Mr. Bates's novel runs to 555 pages, has a large type-page and fairly small type, while Mr. Nathan's has but 232 pages, printed in large type heavily leaded; Mr. Bates is realistic to the point of being documentary, and Mr. Nathan writes fantasy (though somewhat realistic in detail). Both men are alike, however, in writing about problems of the day: "Lean Men" deals with social revolution, "Road of Ages" with the case of the Jews; and they both have a fundamental similarity in that they look on these issues romantically.

One is prepared for this romanticism when one learns that Mr. Bates's hero is deeply interested in music; whatever the music-lover and the musician may be in real life, when found in fiction they display the violent qualities associated with the possession of a beautiful soul. Besides being musical, Francis Charing is also an adherent of Communism, is indeed a party member of such good standing that he is sent to Spain in order to aid the cause of revolution there. This duty entails no especial inconvenience to him, because it enables him to get away to think over the problems of his dual love-life: he has two mistresses and is not sure but what he loves them equally. He goes to Barcelona and there works amongst the Catalonian dock-hands. The bulk of the novel is built up from descriptions of these dock-hands, their daily activities, and the growth of revolutionary ardor and plans amongst them. In truth, when one tries to determine just what contributes to the size of Mr. Bates's novel, it is a difficult task; the proper conclusion would seem to be that he has abandoned any attempt at selectivity and presents each incident with all the wealth of detail with which it presents itself to his own consciousness, without regard for its value in the pattern of fiction. This, coupled with an awkward though not obscure style, makes for some very tedious reading. However, there is a further and deeper reason for Mr. Bates's tediousness, which is that, unless one accepts his *Weltanschauung,* his novel appears to be concerned with nothing very real: it is not that events of his story are unreal in the sense of never having happened but that the vision which discovers them is obfuscated by the distorted partiality of Marxism—something happens, Mr. Bates is roused to the act of sight by the happening, but it is doubtful that he ever sees the true event. Therein lies his romanticism; experience does not discover to him reality but a world created in his own wish fully as much as Chateaubriand's America, despite his insistence on giving us the particulars of its brutality, its sexual promiscuity and its injustice.

Such a preconceived world seems to meet Mr.

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Nathan's eye also. In his book the Jews have been expelled from every country in the world and are trekking across Europe to build a new Zion in the Gobi desert. Mr. Nathan recounts the hardships and tragedies of the trip, its comedy and the human relationships that arise during it. His novel is without plot; this great Jewish hegira serves him as a device by means of which he can exercise his quiet humor and his light and careful touch. That, finally, it is little more than a device must be accounted a serious defect in the novel: when a whole race is being driven across the world, some explanation of the fact must be given, even in a novel of fantasy. Beneath the imagined circumstances of Mr. Nathan's book lies a real and pressing problem, and there seems to be no reason why he should have chosen it for the substratum of his story if he only wished to present the peculiarities of a few characters. Yet one cannot escape taking an attitude toward any question so long as one admits its existence; the tacit attitude of Mr. Nathan seems to be that the Jews are a better people than any other people. There is his preconception and there is the origin of his romanticism; that is why all his people and all that befalls them are bathed in a light that never was on land or sea but only in the beam of Mr. Nathan's own eye.

I have accused Mr. Bates of tediousness, but I do not wish to imply that he is unreadable; the documentary nature of his writing, once one allows for the bias it is presented with, gives his novel an interest that it cannot claim on its merits as fiction—though often enough one cannot take as fact what he gives as fact. Mr. Nathan's skill—which is very minor but not to be honored less for that—enables him to perform all the tasks which Mr. Bates requires of the reader. Although neither man directly pictures the real world, each, I believe, unwittingly tells us much about the real world as it is today, and is for that reason worth reading.

GEOFFREY STONE.

Don Quixote's Creator

A Man Called Cervantes, by Bruno Frank. New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.

ONE fancies that here is a book which would have pleased the man about whom it is written. Like Cervantes's own tale, it is "barren of Conceits or pointed Wit, without either Quotations in the Margin or Annotations at the End." It lacks, too, those things which he particularly scorned—"pompous Preliminaries" and an "Index . . . methodically strung on the Letters of the Alphabet." Again in accord with the literary principles of his subject, its author avoids conventional procedure, introducing Cervantes not as a child but as a young man, tutor in Spanish to Cardinal Giulio Acquaviva, and soon to be established in his rat-infested tower at the Vatican. It is an unusual biography, particularly satisfying, since through disillusionment, fevers, battles, slavery, poverty, neglect, abuse and imprisonment the man is never crowded behind the facts nor analyzed in terms of complexes.

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"A certain strong man," wrote Thomas Carlyle, "fought stoutly at Lepanto, worked stoutly as an Algerine slave; with stout cheerfulness endured famine and nakedness and the world's ingratitude; and sitting in gaol, with one hand left him, wrote our joyfulest, and all but our deepest, modern book, and named it 'Don Quijote.'" Such a man was Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, unrecognized by his own generation and, until the publication of this book, personally unknown to ours.

Without melodrama and in prose both sturdy and sensitive, Bruno Frank chronicles the events of a life crippled by circumstance and crushed by injustice. So amazing is the author's understanding of his character and so closely does he catch his spirit that it is as though Cervantes himself reported the battle of Lepanto where his hand, shattered by a bullet, "hung down like a bloody rag," described the pirate kingdom of Algiers where arms were cut off for trivial offenses, recorded the miserable journey through barren villages eking out supplies for the ill-fated Spanish Armada, and portrayed the king's prison at Seville where, encouraged by thieves and murderers, he conceived his immortal Don Quixote.

It is a book not only commendable for itself, but gratifying in that one feels justice, long delayed, has been done.

VIRGINIA CHASE PERKINS.

Carpe Diem

Sold Out to the Future, by Roy Helton. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

ON FIRST sight Roy Helton makes an unusually original diagnosis of the depression and many other shortcomings of the day when he declares that most of our troubles are due to the modern penchant for living for the future. Without considering seriously the longevity of certain traditions and institutions, he argues quite convincingly that the future of the individual and of society is unpredictable. Therefore, instead of dreaming of some distant day when humanity is perfected or our national destiny is fulfilled, we should direct our energies to the amelioration of the present.

Consider, however, his exact prescription: "Concentration on the self-rewarding task of creating through oneself the most complete awareness of Now and Here that this body, this mind, that feelings can attain is a man's best contribution to his own well-being and to the peace of human society." What bearing can this panacea have on the burning questions raised by the great masses of unemployed and the underprivileged generally? As Berdyaev has shown, it is just such exclusive human self-affirmation that has brought about the modern dehumanization of society. Although Mr. Helton asserts that the production of conscious mind is the purpose of the universe, a number of his observations are vitiated by his deprecations of Christianity and religion in general. "Sold Out to the Future" makes some pertinent suggestions on modern home life, education, world politics and finance, but the author's point of view is arbitrarily limited and his general conclusions are unconvincing.

EDWARD S. SKILLIN, JR.

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For the Youngsters

With Harp and Lute. A Collection of Poems, Old and New, for Catholic Children, by Blanche Jennings Thompson; illustrations by Kate Seredy. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.25.

MRS. THOMPSON'S anthology of Catholic verse for older children has the quality of a white luster vase holding choice flowers. In the division "From the Olden Times," the compiler has made quaint selections from ancient ballads and less-known rhymes such as "Brown Robin's Confession." In the second part she has set those familiar jewels of Catholic poetry beloved by all, such as Colum's "Cradle Song," Chesterton's "The Christ-Child," Yeats's "Ballad of Father Gilligan," and the touching "Grace for Light," by Moira O'Neill. In the third, from "Convent Cell and Cloister," it was the reviewer's pleasure to discover six of Leonard Feeney's poems. "The Lonely Crib" and "The Welcome" are most appealing but, since space forbids long quotations, I shall mention his "The Way of the Cross"—*multum in parvo:*

"Along the dark aisles
Of a chapel dim
The little lame girl
Drags her withered limb.

And all alone she searches
The shadows on the walls
To find the three pictures
Where Jesus falls."

LAURA BENÉT.

For the Tercentenary

Founders and Leaders of Connecticut, 1633-1783; edited by Charles Edward Perry. New York: D. C. Heath and Company. $2.00.

PROFESSOR C. M. ANDREWS concludes a brief survey and analysis of Connecticut's colonial era as a background for the study in miniature biographies with the interesting and inspiring note: "One honor Connecticut possesses beyond any other state . . . her people are the only ones who can look back over three hundred years of independent self-government." And the self-governing colony produced many notable men, but as Governor Cross suggests in his introduction few are more than names today. Jonathan Edwards is known for his dreadful creed; Nathan Hale for his death; Trumbull for the "Brother Jonathan" yarn; Arnold for his treason; and Peters for his Blue Laws.

Mr. Perry and his collaborators in portraying over three score of Connecticut's early worthies in readable sketches within the limits of a few hundred words would revive their names and fame and thereby retell the colony's glories through its founders, preachers, politicians, patriots and writers. Few of the worthies were men of marked genius, but honorable persons who conformed to the Connecticut pattern of steady habits.

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Briefer Mention

Barry Scott, M.D., by Rhoda Truax. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

IN A SOCIETY in which the only faith of large numbers is in science, their supreme good physical well-being, it is not strange that the doctor should indeed come to occupy the place of the medicine-man. Because of this status, the non-professional thoughts and doings of the doctor are invested with much glamor, and where we once had the novel dealing with the struggles of the young clergyman, we now have the novel about the difficulties of the young physician. Miss Truax sets the scenes of these difficulties in a small New England city. Her book is a good example (good, that is, both as an example and as work in a certain class) of fiction written to fill the demand for it rather than to say something best said in fictional form: the dialogue, following a familiar pattern, seems "natural" to the necessarily hurried reader; it has the crude hedonistic philosophy, and the "frankness" which goes with it, that passes for common sense; and it is just a little outrageous now and then so that no one will be outraged by lack of that quality. Like most commercial products, Miss Truax's book probably will not wear well, but that is not required of it; it has the other required virtues of being entirely up-to-date and pretending only slightly to be other than what it is.

The Neo-Classic Theory of Tragedy in England during the Eighteenth Century, by Clarence C. Green. New York: Harvard University Press. $2.50.

MR. GREEN'S sound, well-documented study will interest students of literature and the theatre. He shows how difficult it was for the English in particular to accept classical rules, which rested somewhat more lightly and naturally on the French. By the close of the century neo-classicism had been routed. The book supplements, often to good advantage, Babcock's "Rise of Shakespeare Idolatry." Both are contributions to the thesis that it is erroneous to attribute Romanticism to the nineteenth century exclusively.

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